THE WORKS OF OSSIAN, THE SON of FINGAL.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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THE WORKS OF OSSIAN, THE SON of FINGAL,

Tranſlated from the GALIC LANGUAGE

By JAMES MACPHERSON.

VOL. I.

Fortia facta patrum. VIRG.

PARIS:

Printed by J. FR: VALADE.

And ſold by Theophilus BARROIS, Bookſeller, Quai des Auguſtins.

M. DCC. LXXXIII.

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M. DCC. LXXXII.

TO THE
EARL of BUTE,

Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the Garter, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

I Preſume to preſent to your lordſhip a compleat edition of the Works of Oſſian. They have already been honoured with your approbation, and have been received with applauſe by men of taſte throughout Europe. This addreſs therefore is not an endeavour to ſecure the continuance of the public favour through the ſanction of your name. Little ſolicitous myſelf about the reputation of an author, I permit, with no concern, the Old Bard to take his chance with the world: It proceeds, my Lord, from another cauſe; the ambition of being hereafter known to have met with your favour and pro-

tection in the execution of this work; an honour which will be envied me, perhaps, more some time hence than at present. I throw no reflexions on this age, but there is a great debt of fame owing to the EARL of BUTE, which hereafter will be amply paid: there is also some share of reputation with-held from Ossian, which less prejudiced times may bestow. This similarity between the Statesman and the Poet gives propriety to this dedication; though your Lordship's avowed patronage of literature requires no adventitious aid to direct to you the addresses of authors. It is with pleasure I embrace this opportunity of testifying in public with what perfect attachment,

I am,
my Lord,
your Lordship's most humble,
most obliged,
and most obedient servant,
JAMES MACPHERON

BRITISH MUSEUM

A DISSERTATION
CONCERNING THE ANTIQUITY, &c. of the POEMS OF OSSIAN the Son of FINGAL.

INQUIRIES into the antiquities of nations afford more pleaſure than any real advantage to mankind. The ingenious may form ſyſtems of hiſtory on probabilities and a few facts; but at a great diſtance of time, their accounts muſt be vague and uncertain. The infancy of ſtates and kingdoms is as deſtitute of great events, as of the means of tranſmitting them to poſterity. The arts of polished life, by which alone facts can be preſerved with certainty, are the pro-

duction of a well-formed community. Is it then hiſtorians begin to write, and public tranſactions to be worthy remembrance. The actions of former times are left in obſcurity, or magnified by uncertain traditions. Hence it is that we find ſo much of the marvellous in the origin of every nation; poſterity being always ready to believe any thing, however fabulous, that reflects honour on their anceſtors. The Greeks and Romans were remarkable for this weakneſs. They ſwallowed the moſt abſurd fables concerning the high antiquities of their reſpective nations. Good hiſtorians, however, roſe very early amongſt them, and tranſmitted, with

luſtre, their great actions to poſterity. It is to them that they owe that unrivalled fame they now enjoy; while the great actions of other nations are involved in fables, or loſt in obſcurity. The Celtic nations afford a ſtriking inſtance of this kind. They, though once the maſters of Europe from the mouth of the river Oby (1), in Ruſſia, to Cape Finiſterre, the weſtern point of Gallicia in Spain, are very little mentioned in hiſtory. They truſted their fame to tradition and the ſongs of their bards, which, by the viciſſitude of human affairs, are long ſince loſt. Their ancient language is the only

(1) Plin. l. 6.

monument that remains of them; and the traces of it being found in places ſo widely diſtant from each other, ſerves only to ſhew the extent of their ancient power, but throws very little light on their hiſtory.

Of all the Celtic nations, that which poſſeſſed old Gaul is the moſt renowned; not perhaps on account of worth ſuperior to the reſt, but for their wars with a people who had hiſtorians to tranſmit the fame of their enemies, as well as their own, to poſterity. Britain was firſt peopled by them, according to the teſtimony of the beſt authors (1); its ſituation in reſpect to Gaul makes the opi-

(1) Cæſar. l. 5. Tac. Agric. l. 1. c. 2.

nion probable; but what puts it beyond all diſpute, is that the ſame cuſtoms and language prevailed among the inhabitants of both in the days of Julius Cæſar (z).

The colony from Gaul poſſeſſed themſelves, at firſt, of that part of Britain which was next to their own country; and ſpreading northward, by degrees, as they increaſed in numbers, peopled the whole iſland. Some adventurers paſſing over from thoſe parts of Britain that are within ſight of Ireland, were the founders of the Irish nation: which is a more probable ſtory than the idle fables of Mileſian and Gallician colonies. Dio-

(z) Cæſar. Pomp. Mel. Tacitus.

dorus Siculus (1) mentions it as a thing well known in his time, that the inhabitants of Ireland were originally Britons; and his teſtimony is unqueſtionable, when we conſider that, for many ages, the language and cuſtoms of both nations were the ſame.

Tacitus was of opinion that the ancient Caledonians were of German extract. By the language and cuſtoms which always prevailed in the North of Scotland, and which are undoubtedly Celtic, one would be tempted to differ in opinion from that celebrated writer. The Germans properly ſo called, were not the ſame with the ancient Celtæ. The manners and

(3) Diod. Sic. l. 5.

cuſtoms of the two nations were ſimilar; but their language different. The Germans (1) are the genuine deſcendants of the ancient Daæ, afterwards well known by the name of Daci, and paſſed originally into Europe by the way of the northern countries, and ſettled beyond the Danube, towards the vaſt regions of Tranſilvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia; and from thence advanced by degrees into Germany. The Celtæ (1), it is certain, ſent many colonies into that country, all of whom retained their own laws, language, and cuſtoms; and it is of them, if any colonies came from Germany,

(1) Strabo, l. 7.

(1) Cæſ. l. 6. Liv. l. 5. Tac. de mor. Germ.

into Scotland, that the ancient Caledonians were deſcended.

But whether the Caledonians were a colony of the Celtic Germans, or the ſame with the Gauls that firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of Britain, is a matter of no moment at this diſtance of time. Whatever their origin was, we find them very numerous in the time of Julius Agricola, which is a preſumption that they were long before ſettled in the country. The form of their government was a mixture of ariſtocracy and monarchy, as it was in all the countries where the Druids bore the chief ſway. This order of men ſeems to have been formed on the ſame ſyſtem with the

Dactyli Idæi and Curetes of the ancients. Their pretended intercourſe with heaven; their magic and divination were the ſame. The knowledge of the Druids in natural cauſes, and the properties of certain things, the fruit of the experiments of ages, gained them a mighty reputation among the people. The eſteem of the populace ſoon increaſed into a veneration for the order; which a cunning and ambitious tribe of men took care to improve, to ſuch a degree, that they, in a manner, engroſſed the management of civil, as well as religious, matters. It is generally allowed that they did not abuſe this extraordinary power; the

preſerving their character of ſanctity was ſo eſſential to their influence, that they never broke out into violence or oppreſſion. The chiefs were allowed to execute the laws, but the legiſlative power was entirely in the hands of the Druids (1). It was by their authority that the tribes were united, in times of the greateſt danger, under one head. This temporary king, or Vergobretus (2), was choſen by them, and generally laid down his office at the end of the war. Theſe prieſts enjoyed long this extraordinary privilege among the Celtic nations who lay beyond the pale of the Roman empire. It was in the

(1) Cæſ. l. 6.
(2) Fer-gubreth, *the man to judge.*

beginning of the ſecond century that their power among the Caledonians begun to decline. The poems that celebrate Trathal and Cormac, anceſtors to Fingal, are full of particulars concerning the fall of the Druids, which account for the total ſilence concerning their religion in the poems that are now given to the public.

The continual wars of the Caledonians againſt the Romans hindered the nobility from initiating themſelves, as the cuſtom formerly was, into the order of the Druids. The precepts of their religion were confined to a few, and were not much attended to by a people inured to war. The Vergobretus, or chief ma-

giſtrate, was choſen without the concurrence of the hierarchy, or continued in his office againſt their will. Continual power ſtrengthened his intereſt among the tribes, and enabled him to ſend down, as hereditary to his poſterity, the office he had only received himſelf by election.

On occaſion of a new war againſt the *King of the World*, as the poems emphatically call the Roman emperor, the Druids, to vindicate the honour of the order, began to reſume their ancient privilege of chuſing the Vergobretus. Garmal, the ſon of Tarno being deputed by them, came to the grandfather of the celebrated Fingal, who was then Ver-

gobretus, and commanded him, in the name of the whole order, to lay down his office. Upon his refuſal, a civil war commenced, which ſoon ended in almoſt the total extinction of the religious order of the Druids. A few that remained, retired to the dark receſſes of their groves, and the caves they had formerly uſed for their meditations. It is then we find them in *the circle of ſtones*, and unheeded by the world. A total diſregard for the order, and utter abhorrence of the Druidical rites enſued. Under this cloud of public hate, all that had any knowledge of the religion of the Druids became extinct, and the nation fell into the

laſt degree of ignorance of their rites and ceremonies.

It is no matter of wonder then, that Fingal and his ſon Oſſian make ſo little, if any, mention of the Druids, who were the declared enemies to their ſucceſſion in the ſupreme magiſtracy. It is a ſingular caſe, it muſt be allowed, that there are no traces of religion in the poems aſcribed to Oſſian; as the poetical compoſitions of other nations are ſo cloſely connected with their mythology. It is hard to account for it to thoſe who are not made acquainted with the manner of the old Scottish bards. That race of men carried their notions of martial ho-

nour to an extravagant pitch. Any aid given their heroes in battle, was thought derogate from their fame; and the bards immediately transferred the glory of the action to him who had given that aid.

Had Offian brought down Gods, as often as Homer hath done, to aſſiſt his heroes, this poem had not conſiſted of eulogiums on his friends, but of hymns to theſe ſuperior beings. To this day, thoſe that write in the Galic language ſeldom mention religion in their profane poetry; and when they profeſſedly write of religion, they never interlard with their compoſitions, the actions of their heroes. This cuſtom alone, even

though the religion of the Druids had not been previouſly extinguiſhed, may, in ſome meaſure, account for Oſſian's ſilence concerning the religion of his own times.

To ſay, that a nation is void of all religion, is the ſame thing as to ſay, that it does not conſiſt of people endued with reaſon. The traditions of their fathers, and their own obſervations on the works of nature, together with that ſuperſtition which is inherent in the human frame, have, in all ages, raiſed in the minds of men ſome idea of a ſuperior being.—Hence it is, that in the darkeſt times, and amongſt the moſt barbarous nations, the very

populace themſelves had ſome faint notion, at leaſt, of a divinity. It would be doing injuſtice to Oſſian, who, upon no occaſion, ſhews a narrow mind, to think, that he had not opened his conceptions to that primitive and greateſt of all truths. But let Oſſian's religion be what it will, it is certain he had no knowledge of Chriſtianity, as there is not the leaſt alluſion to it, or any of its rites, in his poems; which abſolutely fixes him to an æra prior to the introduction of that religion. The perſecution begun by Diocletian, in the year 303, is the moſt probable time in which the firſt dawning of Chriſtianity in the north of

Britain, can be fixed.—The humane and mild character of Conſtantius Chlorus, who commanded then in Britain, induced the perſecuted Chriſtians to take refuge under him. Some of them, through a zeal to propagate their tenets, or through fear, went beyond the pale of the Roman empire, and ſettled among the Caledonians, who were the more ready to hearken to their doctrines, as the religion of the Druids had been exploded ſo long before.

Theſe miſſionaries, either through choice, or to give more weight to the doctrine they advanced, took poſſeſſion of the cells and groves of the Druids; and it was from this

retired

retired life they had the name of *Culdees* (1), which, in the language of the country, ſignified *ſequeſtered perſons*. It was with one of the *Culdees* that Oſſian, in his extreme old age, is ſaid to have diſputed concerning the Chriſtian religion. This diſpute is ſtill extant, and is couched in verſe, according to the cuſtom of the times. The extreme ignorance on the part of Oſſian, of the Chriſtian tenets, ſhews that religion had only been lately introduced, as it is not eaſy to conceive, how one of the firſt rank could be totally unacquainted with a religion that had been known for any time in the

(1) Cullich.

country. The diſpute bears the genuine marks of antiquity. The obſolete phraſes and expreſſions peculiar to the times, prove it to be no forgery. If Oſſian then lived at the introduction of Chriſtianity, as by all appearance he did, his epoch will be the latter end of the third, and beginning of the fourth century. What puts this point beyond diſpute, is the alluſion in his poems to the hiſtory of the times.

The exploits of Fingal againſt Caracul (1), the ſon of *the King of the World*, are among the firſt brave

(1) Carac'huil, *terrible eye.* Carac-'healla, *terrible look.* Caracchallamh *a ſort of upper garment.*

actions of his youth. A complete poem, which relates to this ſubject, is printed in this collection.

In the year 210 the Emperor Severus, after returning from his expeditions againſt the Caledonians, at York fell into the tedious illneſs of which he afterwards died. The Caledonians and Maiatæ, reſuming courage from his indiſpoſition, took arms in order to recover the poſſeſſions they had loſt. The enraged Emperor commanded his army to march into their country, and to deſtroy it with fire and ſword. His orders were but ill executed; for his ſon, Caracalla, was at the head of the army, and his thoughts were entire-

ly taken up with the hopes of his father's death, and with ſchemes to ſupplant his brother Geta.—He ſcarcely had entered the enemy's country, when news was brought him that Severus was dead.—A ſudden peace is patched up with the Caledonians, and, as it appears from Dion Caſſius, the country they had loſt to Severus was reſtored to them.

The Caracul of Fingal is no other than Caracalla, who, as the ſon of Severus, the Emperor of Rome, whoſe dominions were extended almoſt over the known world, was not without reaſon called in the poems of Oſſian, *the Son of the King of the World.* The ſpace of time between 211, the year

Severus died, and the beginning of the fourth century, is not ſo great, but Oſſian the ſon of Fingal, might have ſeen the Chriſtians whom the perſecution under Diocletian had driven beyond the pale of the Roman empire.

Oſſian, in one of his many lamentations on the death of his beloved ſon Oſcar, mentions among his great actions, a battle which he fought againſt Caros, *King of ſhips*, on the banks of the *winding Carun* (1). It is more than probable, that the Caros mentioned here, is the ſame with the noted uſurper Carauſius, who aſſumed the purple in the year 287, and ſeizing on Britain, defeated the Em-

(1) Car-avon, *Winding river.*

peror Maximian Herculius, in ſeveral naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in Oſſian's poems, *the King of Ships*. The *winding Carun* is that ſmall river retaining ſtill the name of Carron, and runs in the neighbourhood of Agricola's wall, which Carauſius repaired to obſtruct the incurſions of the Caledonians. Several other paſſages in the poems allude to the wars of the Romans; but the two juſt mentioned clearly fix the epoch of Fingal to the third century; and this account agrees exactly with the Iriſh hiſtories, which place the death of Fingal, the ſon of Comhal, in the year 283, and that of Oſcar and

their own celebrated Cairbat, in the year 296.

Some people may imagine, that the alluſions to the Roman hiſtory might have been induſtriouſly inſerted into the poems, to give them the appearance of antiquity. This fraud muſt then have been committed at leaſt three ages ago, as the paſſages in which the alluſions are made, are alluded to often in the compoſitions of thoſe times.

Every one knows what a cloud of ignorance and barbariſm overſpread the north of Europe three hundred years ago. The minds of men, addicted to ſuperſtition, contracted a narrowneſs that deſtroyed genius. Accordingly

we find the compoſitions of thoſe times trivial and puerile to the laſt degree. But let it be allowed, that, amidſt all the untoward circumſtances of the age, a genius might ariſe, it is not eaſy to determine what could induce him to give the honour of his compoſitions to an age ſo remote. We find no fact that he has advanced, to favour any deſigns which could be entertained by any man vho lived in the fifteenth century. But should we ſuppoſe a poet, through humour, or for reaſons which cannot be ſeen at this diſtance of time, would aſcribe his own compoſitions to Oſſian, it is next to impoſſible, that he could impoſe upon his countrymen, when all

of them were ſo well acquainted with the traditional poems of their anceſtors.

The ſtrongeſt objection to the authenticity of the poems now given to the public under the name of Oſſian, is the improbability of their being handed down by tradition through ſo many centuries. Ages of barbariſm, ſome will ſay, could not produce poems abounding with the diſintereſted and generous ſentiments ſo conſpicuous in the compoſitions of Oſſian; and could theſe ages produce them, it is impoſſible but they muſt be loſt, or altogether corrupted in a long ſucceſſion of barbarous generations.

Theſe objections naturally ſuggeſt themſelves to men unacquainted with the ancient ſtate of the northern parts of Britain. The bards, who were an inferior order of the Druids, did not ſhare their bad fortune. They were ſpared by the victorious king, as it was through their means only he could hope for immortality to his fame. They attended him in the camp, and contributed to eſtabliſh his power by their ſongs. His great actions were magnified, and the populace, who had no ability to examine into his character narrowly, were dazzled with his fame in the rhimes of the bards. In the mean time, men aſſumed ſentiments that

are rarely to be met with in an age of barbariſm. The bards who were originally the diſciples of the Druids, had their minds opened, and their ideas enlarged, by being initiated in the learning of that celebrated order. They could form a perfect hero in their own minds, and aſcribe that character to their prince. The inferior chiefs made this ideal character the model of their conduct, and by degrees brought their minds to that generous ſpirit which breathes in all the poetry of the times. The prince, flattered by his bards, and rivalled by his own heroes, who imitated his character as deſcribed in the eulogies of his poets, endeavoured to excel his

people in merit, as he was above them in ſtation. This emulation continuing, formed at laſt the general character of the nation, happily compounded of what is noble in barbarity, and virtuous and generous in a polished people.

When virtue in peace, and bravery in war, are the characteriſtics of a nation, their actions become intereſting, and their fame worthy of immortality. A generous ſpirit is warmed with noble actions, and becomes ambitious of perpetuating them. This is the true ſource of that divine inſpiration, to which the poets of all ages pretended. When they found their themes inadequate to the

warmth of their imaginations, they varnished them over with fables, ſupplied by their own fancy, or furniſhed by abſurd traditions. Theſe fables, however ridiculous, had their abettors; poſterity either implicitly believed them, or through a vanity natural to mankind, pretended that they did. They loved to place the founders of their families in the days of fable, when poetry, without the fear of contradiction, could give what characters she pleaſed of her heroes. It is to this vanity that we owe the preſervation of what remain of the works of Oſſian. His poetical merit made his heroes famous in a country where heroiſm was much eſteemed and ad-

mired. The poſterity of theſe heroes, or thoſe who pretended to be deſcended from them, heard with pleaſure the eulogiums of their anceſtors; bards were employed to repeat them. This ſpecies of compoſition was not committed to writing, but delivered by oral tradition (1). The care they took to have the poems taught to their children, the uninterrupted cuſtom of repeating them upon certain occaſions, and the happy meaſure of the verſe, ſerved to preſerve them for a long time uncorrupted. This oral chronicle of the Germans was not forgot in the eighth century, and it pro-

(1) *L'Abbé de la Bletterie, Remarques ſur la Germanie.*

bably would have remained to this day, had not learning, which thinks every thing, that is not committed to writing, fabulous, been introduced. It was from poetical traditions that Garcillaſſo compoſed his account of the Yncas of Peru. The Peruvians had loſt all other monuments of their hiſtory, and it was from ancient poems which his mother, a princeſs of the blood of the Yncas, taught him in his youth, that he collected the materials of his hiſtory. If other nations then, that had been often over-run by enemies, and had ſent abroad and received colonies, could, for many ages, preſerve, by oral tradition, their laws and hiſtories uncorrupted,

it is much more probable that the ancient Scots, a people ſo free of intermixture with foreigners, and ſo ſtrongly attached to the memory of their anceſtors, had the works of their bards handed down with great purity.

It will ſeem ſtrange to ſome, that poems admired for many centuries in one part of this kingdom ſhould be hitherto unknown in the other; and that the British, who have carefully traced out the works of genius in other nations, ſhould ſo long remain ſtrangers to their own. This, in a great meaſure, is to be imputed to thoſe who underſtood both languages and never attempted a tranſlation. They, from being acquainted but

with detached pieces, or from a modeſty, which perhaps the preſent tranſlator ought, in prudence, to have followed, deſpaired of making the compoſitions of their bards agreeable to an English reader. The manner of thoſe compoſitions is ſo different from other poems, and the ideas ſo confined to the moſt early ſtate of ſociety, that it was thought they had not enough of variety to pleaſe a poliſhed age.

This was long the opinion of the tranſlator of the following collection; and though he admired the poems, in the original, very early, and gathered part of them from tradition for his own amuſement, yet he never

had the ſmalleſt hopes of ſeeing them in an Engliſh dreſs. He was ſenſible that the ſtrength and manner of both languages were very different, and that it was next to impoſſible to tranſlate the Galic poetry into any thing of tolerable Engliſh verſe; a proſe tranſlation he could never think of, as it muſt neceſſarily fall ſhort of the majeſty of an original.

It is therefore highly probable, that the compoſitions of Oſſian would have ſtill remained in the obſcurity of a loſt language, had not a gentleman, who has himſelf made a figure in the poetical world, inſiſted with the preſent editor for a literal proſe tranſlation of ſome detached piece.

He approved of the ſpecimen, and, through him, copies came to the hands of ſeveral people of taſte in Scotland.

Frequent tranſcription and the corrections of thoſe, who thought they mended the poems by modernizing the ideas, corrupted them to ſuch a degree, that the tranſlator was induced to hearken to the ſolicitations of a gentleman deſervedly eſteemed in Scotland, for his taſte and knowledge in polite literature, and publiſhed the genuine copies under the title of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*. The fragments, upon their firſt appearance, were ſo much approved of, that ſeveral people of rank, as well

as taſte, prevailed with the tranſlator to make a journey to the Highlands and weſtern iſles, in order to recover what remained of the works of Oſſian the ſon of Fingal, the beſt, as well as moſt ancient of thoſe who are celebrated in tradition for their poetical genius. A detail of this journey would be both tedious and unentertaining; let it ſuffice therefore that, after a peregrination of ſix months, the tranſlator collected from tradition, and ſome manuſcripts, all the poems in the following collection, and ſome more ſtill in his hands, though rendered leſs complete by the ravages of time.

The action of the poem that ſtands

the firſt, was not the greateſt or moſt celebrated of the exploits of Fingal. His wars were very numerous, and each of them afforded a theme which employed the genius of his ſon. But, excepting the preſent poem, thoſe pieces are in a great meaſure loſt, and there only remain a few fragments of them in the hands of the tranſlator. Tradition has ſtill preſerved, in many places, the ſtory of the poems; many now living have heard them, in their youth, repeated.

The complete work, now printed, would, in a ſhort time, have ſhared the fate of the reſt. The genius of the highlanders has ſuffered a great change within theſe few years. The

communication with the reſt of the iſland is open, and the introduction of trade and manufactures has deſtroyed that leiſure which was formerly dedicated to hearing and repeating the poems of ancient times. Many have now learned to leave their mountains, and ſeek their fortunes in a milder climate; and though a certain *amor patriæ* may ſometimes bring them back, they have, during their abſence, imbibed enough of foreign manners to deſpiſe the cuſtoms of their anceſtors. Bards have been long diſuſed, and the ſpirit of genealogy has greatly ſubſided. Men begin to be leſs devoted to their chiefs, and conſanguinity is not ſo much regard-

ed. When property is eſtabliſhed, the human mind confines its views to the pleaſures it procures. It does not go back to antiquity, or look forward to ſucceeding ages. The cares of life increaſe, and the actions of other times no longer amuſe. Hence it is, that the taſte for their ancient poetry is at a low ebb among the highlanders. They have not, however, thrown off the good qualities of their anceſtors. Hoſpitality ſtill ſubſiſts, and an uncommon civility to ſtrangers. Friendſhip is inviolable, and revenge leſs blindly followed than formerly.

To ſpeak of the poetical merit of the poems, would be an anticipation on the judgment of the public: and

all that can be ſaid of the tranſlation, is, that it is literal, and that ſimplicity is ſtudied. The arrangement of the words in the original is imitated, and the inverſions of the ſtyle obſerved. As the tranſlator claims no merit from his verſion, he hopes for the indulgence of the public where he fails. He wishes that the imperfect ſemblance he draws, may not prejudice the world againſt an original, which contains what is beautiful in ſimplicity, and grand in the ſublime.

FINGAL,

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM,

In SIX BOOKS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Cuchullin, (general of the Irish tribes, in the minority of Cormac, king of Ireland) ſitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a caſtle of Ulſter, (the other chiefs having gone on a hunting party to Cromla, a neighbouring hill) is informed of the landing of Swaran, king of Lochlin, by Moran, the ſon of Fithil, one of his ſcouts. He convenes the chiefs; a council is held, and diſputes run high about giving battle to the enemy. Connal, the petty king of Togorma, and an intimate friend of Cuchullin, was for retreating, till Fingal, king of thoſe Caledonians who inhabited the north-weſt coaſt of Scotland, whoſe aid had been previouſly ſollicited, ſhould arrive; but Calmar, the ſon of Matha, lord of Lara, a country in Connaught, was for engaging the enemy immediately. — Cuchullin, of himſelf willing to fight, went into the opinion of Calmar. Marching towards the enemy, he miſſed three of his braveſt heroes, Fergus, Duchomar, and Caithbat. Fergus arriving, tells Cuchullin of the death of the two other chiefs; which introduces the affecting epiſode of Morna, the daughter of Cormac. — The army of Cuchullin is deſcried at a diſtance by Swaran, who ſent the ſon of Arno to obſerve the motions of the enemy, while he himſelf ranged his forces in order.

of battle. — The ſon of Arno returning to Swaran, deſcribes to him Cuchullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero. The armies engage, but night coming on, leaves the victory undecided. Cuchullin, according to the hoſpitality of the times, ſends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feaſt, by his bard Carril, the ſon of Kinfena.—Swaran refuſes to come. Carril relates to Cuchullin the ſtory of Grudar and Braſſolis. A party, by Connal's advice, is ſent to obſerve the enemy; which cloſes the action of the firſt day.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CUCHULLIN (1) ſat by Tura's wall; by the tree of the ruſtling leaf.—His

(1) Cuchullin, or rather Cuth-Ullin, *the voice of Ullin*, a poetical name given the ſon of Semo by the bards, from is commanding the forces of the Province of Ulſter againſt the Ferbolg or Belgæ, who were in poſſeſſion of Connaught. Cuchullin when very young married Bragela the daughter of Sorglan, and paſſing over into Iteland, lived for ſome time with Connal, grandſon by a daughter to Congal the petty king of Ulſter. His wiſdom and valour it a ſhort time gained him ſuch reputation, that in the minority of Cormac the ſupreme king of Ireland, he was choſeh guardian to the young king, and ſole manager of the war againſt Swaran king of Lochlin. After a ſeries of great actions he was killed in battle ſomewhere in Connaught, in the twenty-ſeventh year of his age. He was ſo remarkable for his ſtrength, that to deſcribe a ſtrong man it has paſſed into a proverb, » He has the ſtrength

ſpear leaned againſt the moſſy rock. His ſhield lay by him on the graſs. As he thought of mighty Cairbar (1), a hero whom he ſlew in war; the ſcout (2) of the ocean came, Moran (3) the ſon of Fithil.

Riſe, ſaid the youth, Cuchullin, riſe; I ſee the ships of Swaran. Cuchullin, many are the foe: many the heroes of the dark-rolling ſea.

Moran! replied the blue-eyed chief, thou ever trembleſt, ſon of Fithil: Thy fears have much increaſed the foe. Perhaps it is the king (4) of the lonely hills coming to aid me on green Ullin's plains.

of Cuchullin.» They ſhew the remains of his palace at Dunſcaich in the Iſle of Skye; and a ſtone to which he bound his dog Luath, goes ſtill by his name.

(1) Cairbar or Cairbre ſignifies a ſtrong man.

(2) We may conclude from Cuchullin's applying ſo early for foreign aid, that the Irish were not then ſo numerous as they have ſince been; which is a great preſumption againſt the high antiquities of that people. We have the teſtimony of Tacitus that one legion only was thought ſufficient, in the time of Agricola, to reduce the whole Iſland under the Roman yoke; which would not probably have been the caſe, had the Iſland been inhabited for any number of centuries before.

(3) Moran ſignifies many; and Fithil, or rather Fili, *an inferior bard.*

(4) Fingal the ſon of Comhal, and Morna the

I ſaw their chief, ſays Moran, tall as a rock of ice. His ſpear is like that blaſted fir. His ſhield like the riſing moon. He ſat on a rock on the ſhore: his dark hoſt rolled, like clouds, around him. — Many, chief of men! I ſaid, many are our hands of war.—Well art thou named, the Mighty Man, but many mighty men are ſeen from Tura's windy walls. — He anſwered, like a wave on a rock, who in this land appears like me? Heroes ſtand not in my preſence: they fall to earth beneath my hand. None can meet Swaran in the fight but Fingal, king of ſtormy hills. Once we wreſtled on the heath of Malmor (1), and our heels overturned the wood. Rocks fell from their place; and rivulets, changing their courſe, fled murmuring from our ſtrife. Three days we renewed our ſtrife, and heroes ſtood at a diſtance and trembled. On the fourth, Fingal ſays, that the king of the ocean fell; but Swaran ſays,

daughter of Thaddu. His grandfather was Trathal, and great grandfather Trenmor, both of whom are often mentioned in the poem.——Trenmor, according to tradition, had two ſons; Trathal, who ſucceeded him in the Kingdom of Morven, and Conar, called by the bards *Conar the great*, who was elected king of all Ireland, and was the anceſtor of that Cormac who ſat on the Iriſh throne when the invaſion of Swaran happened. It may not be improper here to obſerve, that the accent ought always to be placed on the laſt ſyllable of Fingal.

(1) Meal-mór —— *a great hill.*

he ſtood. Let dark Cuchullin yield to him that is ſtrong as the ſtorms of Malmor.

No: replied the blue-eyed chief, I will never yield to man. Dark Cuchullin will be great or dead. Go, Fithil's ſon, and take my ſpear: ſtrike the ſounding ſhield of Cabait (1). It hangs at Tura's ruſtling gate; the ſound of peace is not its voice. My heroes ſhall hear on the hill.

He went and ſtruck the boſſy ſhield. The hills and their rocks replied. The ſound ſpread along the wood: deer ſtart by the lake of roes. Curach (2) leapt from the ſounding rock; and Connal of the bloody ſpear. Crugal's (3) breaſt of ſnow beats high. The ſon of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the ſhield of war, ſaid Ronnar, the ſpear of Cuchullin, ſaid Lugar.----Son of the ſea, put on thy arms! Calmar lift thy ſounding ſteel! Puno! horrid hero, riſe: Cairbar from thy red tree of Cromla. Bend thy white knee, O Eth; and

(1) Cabait, or rather Cathbait, grandfather to the hero, was ſo remarkable for his valour, that his ſhield was made uſe of to alarm his poſterity to the battles of the family. We find Fingal making the ſame uſe of his own ſhield in the 4th book. —— A horn was the moſt common inſtrument to call the army together before the invention of bagpipes.

(2) Cu-raoch ſignifies *the madneſs of battle.*

(3) Cruth-geal --- *fair-complexioned.*

deſcend from the ſtreams of Lena.—Ca-olt ſtretch thy white ſide as thou moveſt along the whiſtling heath of Mora: thy ſide that is white as the foam of the troubled ſea, when the dark winds pour it on the murmuring rocks of Cuthon (1).

Now I behold the chiefs in the pride of their former deeds; their ſouls are kindled at the battles of old, and the actions of other times. Their eyes are like flames of fire, and roll in ſearch of the foes of land.—Their mighty hands are on their ſwords; and lightning pours from their ſides of ſteel.—They came like ſtreams from the mountains; each rushed roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle in the armour of their fathers. —Gloomy and dark their heroes followed, like the gathering of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven.—The ſounds of crashing arms aſcend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequally burſts the ſong of battle; and rocking Cromla (2) echoes round. On Lena's dusky heath they ſtood, like miſt (3) that shades the hills of autumn: when broken and dark it ſettles high, and lifts its head to heaven.

(1) Cu-thòn——*the mournful ſound of waves.*

(2) Crom-leach ſignified a place of worship among the Druids. It is here the proper name of a hill on the coaſt of Ullin or Ulſter.

(3)——νεφέλῃσιν ἐοικότες ἄστε Κρονίων

Hail, said Cuchullin, sons of the narrow vales, hail ye hunters of the deer. Another sport is drawing near: it is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coast. Shall we fight, ye sons of war! or yield green Innisfail (1) to Lochlin?—O Connal (2) speak, thou first of men! thou breaker of the shields! thou hast often fought with Lochlin; wilt thou lift thy father's spear?

Cuchullin! calm the chief replied, the spear of Connal is keen. It delights to shine in battle, and to mix with the blood of thousands. But tho' my hand is bent on war,

Νηνεμίης, ἐςησεν ἐπ' ἀκροπολοισινόρεσσιν
Ατρέμας. HOM. IL. 5. v. 522.

So when th' embattled clouds in dark array,
Along the skies their gloomy lines display;
The low-hung vapours motionless and still
Rest on the summits of the shaded hill. POPE.

(1) Ireland so called from a colony that settled there, called Falans.——Innis-fail, *i. e.* the island of the Fa il or Falans.

(2) Connal, the friend of Cuchullin, was the son of Cathbait prince of Tongorma or the *island of blue waves*, ptobably one of the Hebrides. His mother was Fioncoma the daughter of Congal. He had a son by Foba of Conachar-nessar, who was afterwards king of Ulster. For his services in the war against Swaran he had lands conferred on him, which, from his name, were called Tir-chonnuil or Tir-connel, *i. e.* the land of Connal.

my heart is for the peace of Erin (1). Behold, thou firſt in Cormac's war, the ſable fleet of Swaran. His maſts are as numerous on our coaſt as reeds in the lake of Lego. His ships are like foreſts cloathed with miſt, when the trees yield by turns to the ſqually wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Connal is for peace.—Fingal would shun his arm the firſt of mortal men: Fingal that ſcatters the mighty, as ſtormy winds the heath; when the ſtreams roar thro' echoing Cona: and night ſettles with all her clouds on the hill.

Fly, thou chief of peace, ſaid Calmar (2) the ſon of Matha; fly, Connal, to thy ſilent hills, where the ſpear of battle never shone; purſue the dark-brown deer of Cromla: and ſtop with thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena. But, blue-eyed ſon of Semo, Cuchullin, ruler of the war, ſcatter thou the ſons of Lochlin (3), and roar thro' the ranks of their

(1) Erin, a name of Ireland; from *ear* or *iar* Weſt, and *in* an iſland. This name was not always confined to Ireland, for there is the higheſt probability that the *Ierne* of the ancients was Britain to the North of the Forth. ——For Ierne is ſaid to be to the North of Britain, which could not be meant of Ireland.

STRABO, l. 2. & 4. CASAUB. l. 1.

(2) Calm-er, *a ſtrong man.*

(3) The Galic name of Scandinavia in general; in a more confined ſenſe, that of the peninſula of Jutland.

pride. Let no veſſel of the kingdom of Snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inis-tore(1). O ye dark winds of Erin riſe! roar ye whirlwinds of the heath! Amidſt the tempeſt let me die, torn in a cloud by angry ghoſts of men; amidſt the tempeſt let Calmar die, if ever chace was ſport to him ſo much as the battle of shields.

Calmar! ſlow replied the chief, I never fled, O Matha's ſon. I was ſwift with my friends in battle, but ſmall is the fame of Connal. The battle was won in my preſence, and the valiant overcame. But, ſon of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal come with battle. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the ſword and ſpear. My joy ſhall be in the midſt of thouſands, and my ſoul brighten in the gloom of the fight.

To me, Cuchullin replies, pleaſant is the noiſe of arms: pleaſant as the thunder of heaven before the ſhower of Spring. But gather all the shining tribes that I may view the ſons of war. Let them move along the heath, bright as the ſun-ſhine before a ſtorm; when the weſt wind collects the clouds, and the oaks of Morven echo along the ſhore.

(1) Innis-tore, *the iſland of whales*, the ancient name of the Orkney iſlands.

But where are my friends in battle? The companions of my arm in danger? Where art thou, white-boſom'd Cathbat? Where is that cloud in war, Duchomar (1)? And haſt thou left me, O Fergus (2)! in the day of the ſtorm? Fergus, firſt in our joy at the feaſt! ſon of Roſſa! arm of death! comeſt thou like a roe (3) from Malmor? Like a hart from the ecchoing hills?—Hail thou ſon of Roſſa! what ſhades the ſoul of war?

Four ſtones (4), replied the chief, riſe on the grave of Cathbat.—Theſe hands have laid in earth Duchomar, that cloud in war. Cathbat, thou ſon of Torman, thou wert a ſun-beam on the hill.—And thou, O valiant Duchomar, like the miſt of marshy Lano;

(1) Dubhchomar, *a black well-ſhaped man.*

(2) Fear-guth, ——*the man of the word;* or a commander of an army.

(3) Be thou like a roe or young hart on the mountains of Bether. SOLOMON's Song.

(4) This paſſage alludes to the manner of burial among the ancient Scots. They opened a grave ſix or eight feet deep: the bottom was lined with fine clay; and on this they laid the body of the deceaſed, and, if a warrior, his ſword, and the heads of twelve arrows by his ſide. Above they laid another ſtratum of clay, in which they placed the horn of a deer, the ſymbol of hunting. The whole was covered with a fine mold, and four ſtones placed on end to mark the extent of the grave. Theſe are the four ſtones alluded to here.

when it ſails over the plains of autumn and brings death to the people. Morna, thou faireſt of maids! calm is thy ſleep in the cave of the rock. Thou haſt fallen in darkneſs like a ſtar, that ſhoots athwart the deſart, when the traveller is alone, and mourns the tranſient beam.

Say, ſaid Semo's blue-eyed ſon, ſay how fell the chiefs of Erin? Fell they by the ſons of Lochlin: ſtriving in the battle of heroes? Or what confines the chiefs of Cromla to the dark and narrow houſe (1)?

Cathbat, replied the hero, fell by the ſword of Duchomar at the oak of the noiſy ſtreams. Duchomar came to Tura's cave, and ſpoke to the lovely Morna.

Morna (2), faireſt among women, lovely daughter of Cormac-cairbar. Why in the circle of ſtones; in the cave of the rock alone? The ſtream murmurs hoarſely. The old tree's groan is in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee, and dark are the clouds of the ſky. But thou art like ſnow on the heath; and thy hair like the miſt of Cromla; when it curls on the rocks, and ſhines to the beam of the weſt.—Thy breaſts are like two ſmooth rocks ſeen

(1) The grave.——The houſe appointed for all living. Job.

(2) Muirne or Morna, *a woman beloved by all,*

from Branno of the ſtreams. Thy arms like two white pillars in the halls of the mighty Fingal.

From whence, the white-armed maid replied, from whence, Duchomar the moſt gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows and terrible. Red are thy rolling eyes. Does Swaran appear on the ſea? What of the foe, Duchomar?

From the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I ſlain with my bended yew. Three with my long bounding dogs of the chace.—Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my ſoul.—I have ſlain one ſtately deer for thee.—High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind.

Duchomar! calm the maid replied, I love thee not, thou gloomy man.—Hard is thy heart of rock, and dark thy terrible brow. But Cathbat, thou ſon of Torman (1), thou art the love of Morna. Thou art like a ſun-beam on the hill in the day of the gloomy ſtorm. Saweſt thou the ſon of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of Cathbat.

(1) Torman, *Thunder.* This is the true origine of the Jupiter Taramis of the ancients.

And long ſhall Morna wait, Duchomar ſaid, his blood is on my ſword.—Long ſhall Morna wait for him. He fell at Branno's ſtream. High on Cromla I will raiſe his tomb, daughter of Cormac-cairbar; but fix thy love on Duchomar, his arm is ſtrong as a ſtorm.—

And is the ſon of Torman fallen? ſaid the maid of the tearful eye. Is he fallen on his ecchoing heath; the youth with the breaſt of ſnow? he that was firſt in the chace of the hill; the foe of the ſtrangers of the ocean.—Duchomar thou art dark (1) indeed, and cruel is thy arm to Morna. But give me that ſword, my foe; I love the blood of Caithbat.

He gave the ſword to her tears; but ſhe pierced his manly breaſt. He fell, like the bank of a mountain ſtream; ſtretched out his arm and ſaid;

Daughter of Cormac-cairbar, thou haſt ſlain Duchomar. The ſword is cold in my breaſt: Morna, I feel it cold. Give me to Moina (2) the maid; Duchomar was the dream of her night. She will raiſe my tomb: and the hunter ſhall ſee it and praiſe me. But draw the ſword from my breaſt; Morna, the ſteel is cold.

(1) She alludes to is name——*the dark man.*

(2) Moina, *ſoft in temper and perſon.*

She came, in all her tears, she came, and drew it from his breaſt. He pierced her white ſide with ſteel; and ſpread her fair locks on the ground. Her burſting blood ſounds from her ſide: and her white arm is ſtained with red. Rolling in death she lay, and Tura's cave anſwered to her groans.—

Peace, ſaid Cuchullin, to the ſouls of the heroes; their deeds were great in danger. Let them ride around (1) me on clouds, and shew their features of war: that my ſoul may be ſtrong in danger; my arm like the thunder of heaven.—But be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my reſt; when my thoughts are of peace; and the din of arms is over.—Gather the ſtrength of the tribes, and move to the wars of Erin.—Attend the car of my battles; rejoice in the noiſe of my courſe.—Place three ſpears by my ſide; follow the bounding of my ſteeds; that my ſoul may be ſtrong in my friends, when the battle darkens round the beams of my ſteel.

As rushes a ſtream (2) of foam from the dark

(1) It was the opinion then, as indeed it is to this day, of ſome of the highlanders, that the ſouls of the deceaſed hovered round their living friends; and ſometimes appeared to them when they were about to enter on any great undertaking.

(2) Ως δ' ὅτε χείμαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ, κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες
Ες μισγάλειαν συμβάλλετον ἔβριμον ὕδωρ,
Κρηνῶν ἐκ μεγάλαων κοίλης ἔντοσθε χαράδρης. Hom.

shady ſteep of Cromla; when the thunder is rolling above, and dark-brown night on half the hill. So fierce, ſo vaſt, ſo terrible rushed on the ſons of Erin. The chief like a whale of ocean, whom all his billows follow, poured valour forth as a ſtream, rolling his might along the shore.

The ſons of Lochlin heard the noiſe as the ſound of a winter-ſtream. Swaran ſtruck his boſſy shield, and called the ſon of Arno. What murmur rolls along the hill like the gathered flies of evening? The ſons of Innisfail deſcend, or ruſtling winds roar in the diſtant wood. Such is the noiſe of Gormal before the white tops of my waves ariſe. O ſon of Arno, aſcend the hill and view the dark face of the heath.

He went, and trembling, ſwift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high againſt his ſide. His words were faultering, broken, ſlow.

Riſe, ſon of ocean, riſe chief of the dark-

As torrents roll encreas'd by numerous rills
With rage impetuous down the ecchoing hills;
Rush to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,
Roar thro' a thouſand channels to the main.
POPE.

Aut ubi decurſu rapido de montibus altis,
Dant ſonitum ſpumoſi amnes, & in æquora currunt,
Quiſque ſuum populatus iter. VIRGIL.

brown shields. I ſee the dark, the mountain-ſtream of the battle: the deep-moving ſtrength of the ſons of Erin. — The car, the car of battle comes, like flame of death; the rapid car of Cuchullin, the noble ſon of Semo. It bends behind like a wave near a rock; like the golden miſt of the heath. Its ſides are emboſſed with ſtones, and ſparkle like the ſea round the boat of night. Of polished yew is its beam, and its ſeat of the ſmootheſt bone. The ſides are replenished with ſpears; and the bottom is the footſtool of heroes. Before the right ſide of the car is ſeen the ſnorting horſe. The high-maned, broad-breaſted, proud, high-leaping, ſtrong ſteed of the hill. Loud and reſounding is his hoof; the ſpreading of his mane above is like that ſtream of ſmoke on the heath. Bright are the ſides of the ſteed, and his name is Sullin-Sifadda.

Before the left ſide of the car is ſeen the ſnorting horſe. The dark-maned, high-headed, ſtrong-hooffed, fleet, bounding ſon of the hill: his name is Duſronnal among the ſtormy ſons of the ſword.—A thouſand thongs bind the car on high. Hard polished bits ſhine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs bright-ſtudded with gems, bend on the ſtately necks of the ſteeds.—The ſteeds that like wreaths of miſt fly over the ſtreamy vales. The wildneſs of deer is in their courſe, the ſtrength of the eagle deſcending on her prey. Their noiſe is like

the blaſt of winter on the ſides of the ſnow-headed Gormal (1).

Within the car is ſeen the chief; the ſtrong ſtormy ſon of the ſword; the hero's name is Cuchullin, ſon of Semo king of ſhells. His red cheek is like my polished yew. The look of his blue-rolling eye is wide beneath the dark arch of his brow. His hair flies from his head like a flame, as bending forward he wields the ſpear. Fly, king of ocean, fly; he comes, like a ſtorm, along the ſtreamy vale.

When did I fly, replied the king, from the battle of many ſpears? When did I fly, ſon of Arno, chief of the little ſoul? I met the ſtorm of Gormal when the foam of my waves was high; I met the ſtorms of the clouds and ſhall I fly from a hero? Were it Fingal himſelf, my ſoul ſhould not darken before him.—Riſe to the battle, my thouſands; pour round me like the echoing main. Gather round the bright ſteel of your king; ſtrong as the rocks of my land; that meet the ſtorm with joy, and ſtretch their dark woods to the wind.

As autumn's (2) dark ſtorms pour from two

(1) A hill of Lochlin.

(2) The reader may compare this paſſage with a ſimilar one in Homer. Iliad. 4. v. 446.

Now ſhield with ſhield, with helmet helmet clos'd,
To armour armour, lance to lance oppos'd,

choing hills, towards each other approached the heroes.—As two dark ſtreams from high rocks meet, and mix and roar on the plain; loud, rough and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Innis-fail. Chief mixed his ſtrokes with chief, and man with man; ſteel, clanging, ſounded on ſteel, helmets are cleft on high. Blood burſts and ſmoaks around.—Strings twang on the polished yews. Darts rush along the sky. Spears fall like the circles of light that gild the ſtormy face of night.

As the troubled noiſe of the ocean when roll the waves on high; as the laſt peal of the thunder of heaven, ſuch is the noiſe of battle. Though Cormac's hundred bards were there to give the war to ſong; feeble were the voices of a hundred bards to ſend the deaths to future times. For many were the falls of the heroes and wide poured the blood of the valiant.

Hoſt againſt hoſt, with shadowy ſquadrons drew,
The ſounding darts in iron tempeſts flew;
With ſtreaming blood the ſlipp'ry fields are dy'd,
And ſlaughter'd heroes ſwell the dreadful tide.
POPE.

Statius has very happily imitated Homer.

Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,
Enſe minax enſis, pede pes, & cuſpide cuſpis, &c.

Arms on armour crashing, bray'd
Horrible diſcord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd, &c. MILTON.

Mourn, ye ſons of ſong, the death of the noble Sithallin (1).— Let the ſighs of Fiona riſe on the dark heaths of her lovely Ardan.— They fell, like two hinds of the deſart, by the hands of the mighty Swaran; when, in the midſt of thouſands he roared; like the ſhrill ſpirit of a ſtorm, that ſits dim, on the clouds of Gormal, and enjoys the death of the mariner.

Nor ſlept thy hand by thy ſide, chief of the iſle of miſt (2); many were the deaths of thine arm, Cuchullin, thou ſon of Semo. His ſword was like the beam of heaven when it pierces the ſons of the vale; when the people are blaſted and fall, and all the hills are burning around.— Duſronnal (3) ſnorted over the bodies of heroes; and Sifadda (4) bathed his hoof in blood. The battle lay behind them as groves overturned on the deſart of Cromla; when the blaſt has paſſed the heath laden with the ſpirits of night.

Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O

(1) Sithallin ſignifies *a handſome man*;—Fiona, *a fair maid*;—and Ardan, *pride*.

(2) The Iſle of Sky; not improperly called the *Iſle of miſt*, as its high hills, which catch the clouds from the weſtern ocean, occaſion almoſt continual rains.

(3) One of Cuchullin's horſes. Dubhſtron-gheal.

(4) Sith-fadda, *i. e. a long ſtride*.

maid of Iniſtore (1), bend thy fair head over the waves; thou fairer than the ſpirit of the hills; when it moves in a ſun-beam at noon over the ſilence of Morven. He is fallen! thy youth is low; pale beneath the ſword of Cuchullin. No more ſhall valour raiſe the youth to match the blood of kings.—Trenar, lovely Tremard died, thou maid of Iniſtore. His gray dogs are howling at home, and ſee his paſſing ghoſt. His bow is in the hall unſtrung. No ſound is in the heath of his hinds.

As roll a thouſand waves to the rocks, ſo Swaran's hoſt came on; as meets a rock a thouſand waves, ſo Innis-fail met Swaran. Death raiſes all his voices around, and mixes with the ſound of ſhields.—Each hero is a pillar of darkneſs, and the ſword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers that riſe by turns on the red ſon of the furnace.

(1) *The maid of Iniſtore* was the daughter of Gorlo king of Iniſtore or Orkney iſlands. Trenar was brother to the king of Iniſcon, ſuppoſed to be one of the islands of Shetland. The Orkneys and Shetland were at that time ſubject to the king of Lochlin. We find that the dogs of Trenar are ſenſible at home of the death of their maſter, the very inſtant he is killed.——It was the opinion of the times, that the ſouls of heroes went immediately after death to the hills of their country, and the ſcenes they frequented the moſt happy time of their life. It was thought too that dogs and horſes ſaw the ghoſts of the deceaſed.

Who are theſe on Lena's heath that are ſo gloomy and dark? Who are theſe like two clouds (1), and their ſwords like lightning above them? The little hills are troubled around, and the rocks tremble with all their moſs.—Who is it but Ocean's ſon and the car-borne chief of Erin? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they ſee them dim on the heath. Now night conceals the chiefs in her clouds, and ends the terrible fight.

It was on Cromla's ſhaggy ſide that Dorglas placed the deer (2); the early fortune of the chace, before the heroes left the hill.—A hundred youths collect the heath; ten heroes blow the fire; three hundred chuſe the polished ſtones. The feaſt is ſmoaking wide.

Cuchullin, chief of Erin's war, reſumed

(1) As when two black clouds
With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caſpian. MILTON.

(2) The ancient manner of preparing feaſts after hunting, is handed down by tradition. —— A pit lined with ſmooth ſtones was made; and near it ſtood a heap of ſmooth flat ſtones of the flint kind. The ſtones as well as the pit were properly heated with heath. Then they laid ſome veniſon in the bottom, and a ſtratum of the ſtones above it; and thus they did alternately till the pit was full. The whole was covered over with heath to confine the ſteam. Whether this is probable I cannot ſay; but ſome pits are ſhewn, which the vulgar ſay, were uſed in that manner.

his

his mighty ſoul. He ſtood upon his beamy ſpear, and ſpoke to the ſon of ſongs; to Carril of other times, the gray-haired ſon of Kinfena (1) Is this feaſt ſpread for me alone, and the king of Lochlin on Ullin's ſhore, far from the deer of his hills, and ſounding halls of his feaſts? Riſe, Carril of other times, and carry my words to Swaran; tell him that came from the roaring of waters, that Cuchullin gives his feaſt. Here let him liſten to the ſound of my groves amidſt the clouds of night. — For cold and bleak the bluſtering winds rush over the foam of his ſeas. Here let him praiſe the trembling harp, and hear the ſongs of heroes.

Old Carril went, with ſofteſt voice, and called the king of dark-brown ſhields. Riſe from the skins of thy chace, riſe, Swaran king of groves.—Cuchullin gives the joy of ſhells; partake the feaſt of Erin's blue-eyed chief.

He anſwered like the ſullen ſound of Cromla before a ſtorm. Though all thy daughters, Innis-fail! ſhould extend their arms of ſnow; raiſe high the heavings of their breaſts, and ſoftly roll their eyes of love; yet, fixed as Lochlin's thouſand rocks, here Swaran ſhall remain; till morn, with the young beams of my eaſt, ſhall light me to the death of

(1) Cean-feana, *i. e. the head of the people.*

Cuchullin. Pleaſant to my ear is Lochlin's wind. It ruſhes over my ſeas. It ſpeaks aloft in all my ſhrowds, and brings my green foreſts to my mind; the green foreſts of Gormal that often echoed to my winds, when my ſpear was red in the chace of the boar. Let dark Cuchullin yield to me the ancient throne of Cormac, or Erin's torrents ſhall ſhew from their hills the red foam of the blood of his pride.

Sad is the ſound of Swaran's voice, ſaid Carril of other times: —

Sad to himſelf alone, ſaid the blue-eyed ſon of Semo. But, Carril, raiſe thy voice on high, and tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in ſong; and give the joy of grief. For many heroes and maids of love have moved on Innis-fail. And lovely are the ſongs of woe that are heard on Albion's rocks; when the noiſe of the chace is over, and the ſtreams of Cona anſwer to the voice of Oſſian (1).

(1) Oſſian the ſon of Fingal and author of the Poem. One cannot but admire the addreſs of the poet in putting his own praiſe ſo naturally into the mouth of Cuchullin. The Cona here mentioned is perhaps that ſmall river that runs through Glenco in Argyleſhire. One of the hills which environ that romantic valley is ſtill called Scorna-fena, or the hill of Fingal's people.

In other days (1), Carril replies, came the ſons of Ocean to Erin. A thouſand veſſels bounded over the waves to Ullin's lovely plains. The ſons of Innis-fail aroſe to meet the race of dark-brown ſhields. Cairbar, firſt of men, was there, and Grudar, ſtately youth. Long had they ſtrove for the ſpotted bull, that lowed on Golbun's (2) echoing heath. Each claimed him as his own; and death was often at the point of their ſteel.

Side by ſide the heroes fought, and the ſtrangers of Ocean fled. Whoſe name was fairer on the hill than the name of Cairbar and Grudar! — But ah! why ever lowed the bull on Golbun's echoing heath? They ſaw him leaping like the ſnow. The wrath of the chiefs returned.

On Lubar's (3) graſſy banks they fought, and Grudar, like a ſun-beam, fell. Fierce

(1) This epiſode is introduced with propriety. Calmar and Connal, two of the Iriſh heroes, had diſputed warmly before the battle about engaging the ennemy. Carril endeavours to reconcile them with the ſtory of Cairbar and Grudar; who, tho' enemies before, fought *ſide by ſide* in the war. The poet obtained his aim, for we find Calmar and Connal perfectly reconciled in the third book.

(2) Golb-bhean, as well as Cromleach, ſignifies *a crooked hill.* It is here the name of a mountain in the county of Sligo.

(3) Lubar —— a river in Ulſter. *Labhar*, loud, noiſy.

Cairbar came to the vale of the echoing Tura, where Braſſolis (1), faireſt of his ſiſters, all alone, raiſed the ſong of grief. She ſung of the actions of Grudar, the youth of her ſecret ſoul. — She mourned him in the field of blood; but ſtill she hoped for his return. Her white boſom is ſeen from her robe, as the moon from the clouds of night. Her voice was ſofter than the harp to raiſe the ſong of grief. Her ſoul was fixed on Grudar; the ſecret look of her eye was his.—When ſhalt thou come in thine arms, thou mighty in the war?—

Take, Braſſolis, Cairbar came and ſaid, take, Braſſolis, this ſhield of blood. Fix it on high within my hall, the armour of my foe. Her ſoft heart beat againſt her ſide. Diſtracted, pale, she flew. She found her youth in all his blood; she died on Cromla's heath. Here reſts their duſt, Cuchullin; and theſe two lonely yews, ſprung from their tombs, wish to meet on high. Fair was Braſſolis on the plain, and Grudar on the hill. The bard ſhall preſerve their names, and repeat them to future times.

Pleaſant is thy voice, O Carril, ſaid the blue-eyed chief of Erin; and lovely are the words of other times. They are like the calm

(1) Braſſolis ſignifies *a woman with a white breaſt.*

shower (1) of ſpring, when the ſun looks on the field, and the light cloud flies over the hills. O ſtrike the harp in praiſe of my love, the lonely ſun-beam of Dunſcaich. Strike the harp in the praiſe of Bragéla (2), of her that I left in the Iſle of Miſt, the ſpouſe of Semo's ſon. Doſt thou raiſe thy fair face from the rock to find the ſails of Cuchullin? — The ſea is rolling far diſtant, and its white foam ſhall deceive thee for my ſails. Retire, for it is night, my love, and the dark winds ſigh in thy hair. Retire to the halls of my feaſts, and think of the times that are paſt: for I will not return till the ſtorm of war is ceaſed. O Connal, ſpeak of wars and arms, and ſend her from my mind, for lovely with her raven-hair is the white-boſomed daughter of Sorglan.

(1) Homer compares ſoft piercing words to the fall of ſnow.

——ἐπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίῃσιν.

But when he ſpeaks, what elocution flows!
Like the ſoft fleeces of deſcending ſnows. POPE.

(2) Bragéla was the daughter of Sorglan, and the wife of Cuchullin.——Cuchullin, upon the death of Artho, ſupreme king of Ireland, paſſed over into Ireland, probably by Fingal's order, to take upon him the adminiſtration of affairs in that kingdom, during the minority of Cormac the ſon of Artho. He left his wife Bragéla in Dunſcaich, the ſeat of the family, in the Iſle of Sky, where the remains of his palace are ſtill ſhewn; and a ſtone, to which he bound his dog Luath, goes ſtill by his name.

Connal, ſlow to ſpeak, replied: Guard againſt the race of Ocean. Send thy troop of night abroad, and watch the ſtrength of Swaran. — Cuchullin! I am for peace till the race of the deſart come; till Fingal come, the firſt of men, and beam, like the ſun, on our fields.

The hero ſtruck the ſhield of his alarms — the warriors of the night moved on. The reſt lay in the heath of the deer, and ſlept amidſt the dusky wind. — The ghoſts (1) of the lately dead were near, and ſwam on gloomy clouds. And far diſtant, in the dark ſilence of Lena, the feeble voices of death were heard.

(1) It was long the opinion of the ancient Scots, that a ghoſt was heard ſhrieking near the place where a death was to happen ſoon after. The accounts given, to this day, among the vulgar, of this extraordinary matter, are very poetical. The ghoſt comes mounted on a meteor, and ſurrounds twice or thrice the place deſtined for the perſon to die; and then goes along the road through which the funeral is to paſs, ſhrieking at intervals; at laſt, the meteor and ghoſt diſappear above the burial place.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT to Book II.

The ghoſt of Crugal, one of the Iriſh heroes who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretels the defeat of Cuchullin in the next battle; and earneſtly adviſes him to make peace with Swaran. Connal communicates the viſion; but Cuchullin is inflexible; from a principle of honour he would not be the firſt to ſue for peace, and he reſolved to continue the war. Morning comes; Swaran propoſes diſhonourable terms to Cuchullin, which are rejected. The battle begins, and is obſtinately fought for ſome time, until, upon the flight of Grumal, the whole Iriſh army gave way. Cuchullin and Connal cover their retreat: Carril leads them to a neighbouring hill, whither they are ſoon followed by Cuchullin himſelf, who deſcries the fleet of Fingal making towards the coaſt; but, night coming on, he loſt ſight of it again. Cuchullin, dejected after his defeat, attributes his ill ſucceſs to the death of Ferda his friend, whom he had killed ſome time before. Carril, to ſhew that ill ſucceſs did not always attend thoſe who innocently killed their friends, introduces the epiſode of Comal and Galvina.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CONNAL (1) lay by the ſound of the mountain ſtream, beneath the aged tree.

(1) The ſcene of Connal's repoſe is familiar to thoſe who have been in the Highlands of Scotland. The poet removes him to a diſtance from the army, to add more horror to the deſcription of Crugal's ghoſt by the lonelineſs of the place. It perhaps will not be diſagreeable to the reader, to ſee how two other ancient poets handled a ſimilar ſubject.

Ηλθη δ' επι ψυχη Πατροκληος δειλοῖο
Παντ' αυτῳ μεγεθος και ὁμματα κατ' ειχυια
Και φωνην, &c. HOM. Il. 23.

When lo! the ſhade, before his cloſing eyes,
Of ſad Patroclus roſe or ſeem'd to riſe,
In the ſame robe he living wore, he came,
In ſtature, voice, and pleaſing look the ſame.

A ſtone, with its moſs, ſupported his head. Shrill thro' the heath of Lena, he heard the voice of night. At diſtance from the heroes

The form familiar hover'd o'er his head:
And ſleeps Achilles thus? the phantom ſaid. POPE.

In ſomnis ecce ante oculos mœſtiſſimus Hector
Viſus adeſſe mihi, largosque effundere fletus,
Raptatus bigis, ut quondam, aterque cruento
Pulvere, perque pedes trajectus lora tumentes.
Hei mihi qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore, qui redit exuviis indutus Achillis,
Vel Danaûm Phrygios jaculatus puppibus ignes;
Squallentem barbam & concretos ſanguine crines
Vulneraque illa gerens quæ circum plurima muros
Accepit patrios. Æn. lib. 2.

When Hector's ghoſt before my ſight appears:
A bloody ſhroud he ſeem'd, and bath'd in tears.
Such as he was, when, by Pelides ſlain,
Theſſalian courſers drag'd him o'er the plain.
Swoln were his feet, as when the thongs were thruſt
Through the bor'd holes, his body black with duſt.
Unlike that Hector, who return'd from toils
Of war triumphant, in Æacian ſpoils:
Or him, who made the fainting Greeks retire,
And launch'd againſt their navy Phrygian fire.
His hair and beard ſtood ſtiffen'd with his gore;
And all the wounds he for his country bore.

DRYDEN.

he lay, for the ſon of the ſword feared no foe.

My hero ſaw in his reſt a dark-red ſtream of fire coming down from the hill. Crugal ſat upon the beam, a chief that lately fell. He fell by the hand of Swaran, ſtriving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the ſetting moon; his robes are of the clouds of the hill: his eyes are like two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breaſt.

Crugal, ſaid the mighty Connal, ſon of Dedgal famed on the hill of deer! Why ſo pale and ſad, thou breaker of the shields? Thou haſt never been pale for fear.—What diſturbs the ſon of the hill?

Dim, and in tears, he ſtood and ſtretched his pale hand over the hero.—Faintly he raiſed his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego.

My ghoſt, O Connal, is on my native hills; but my corſe is on the ſands of Ullin. Thou ſhalt never talk with Crugal, or find his lone ſteps in the heath. I am light as the blaſt of Cromla, and I move like the ſhadow of miſt. Connal, ſon of Colgar (1), I ſee the dark

(1) Connal the ſon of Caithbat, the friend of Cuchullin, is ſometimes, as here, called the ſon of Colgar; from one of that name who was the founder of his family.

cloud of death: it hovers over the plains of Lena. The ſons of green Erin ſhall fall. Remove from the field of ghoſts. — Like the darkened moon (z) he retired, in the midſt of the whiſtling blaſt.

Stay, ſaid the mighty Connal, ſtay my dark-red friend. Lay by that beam of heaven, ſon of the windy Cromla. What cave of the hill is thy lonely houſe? What green-headed hill is the place of thy reſt? Shall we not hear thee in the ſtorm? In the noiſe of the mountain-ſtream? When the feeble ſons of the wind come forth, and ride on the blaſt of the deſart.

The ſoft-voiced Connal roſe in the midſt of his ſounding arms. He ſtruck his ſhield above Cuchullin. The ſon of battle waked.

Why, ſaid the ruler of the car, comes Connal through the night? My ſpear might turn againſt the ſound; and Cuchullin mourn the death of his friend. Speak, Connal, ſon of Colgar, ſpeak, thy counſel is like the ſon of heaven.

Son of Semo, replied the chief, the ghoſt of

(1) Ψυχη δε κατα χθονος, ηυτε καπνος
Ωχετο τετριγυια. HOM. Il. 23. v. 100.

Like a thin ſmoke he ſees the ſpirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry. POPE,

Crugal came from the cave of his hill.—The ſtars dim-twinkled through his form; and his voice was like the ſound of a diſtant ſtream. —He is a meſſenger of death.— He ſpeaks of the dark and narrow houſe. Sue for peace, O chief of Dunſcaich; or fly over the heath of Lena.

He ſpoke to Connal, replied the hero, though ſtars dim-twinkled through his form. Son of Colgar, it was the wind that murmured in the caves of Lena.—Or if it was the form (1) of Crugal, why didſt thou not force him to my ſight? Haſt thou enquired where is his cave? The houſe of the ſon of the wind? My ſword might find that voice, and force his knowledge from him. And ſmall is his knowledge, Connal, for he was here to-day. He could not have gone beyond our hills, and who could tell him there of our death?

Ghoſts fly on clouds and ride on winds; ſaid Connal's voice of wiſdom. They reſt together in their caves, and talk of mortal men.

Then let them talk of mortal men; of every man but Erin's chief. Let me be forgot in their

(1) The poet teaches us the opinions that prevailed in his time concerning the ſtate of ſeparate ſouls. From Connal's expreſſion, « That the ſtars dim-twinkled through the form of Crugal, » and Cuchullin's reply, we may gather that they both thought the ſoul was material; ſomething like the εἴδωλον of the ancient Greeks.

cave; for I will not fly from Swaran.—If I muſt fall, my tomb ſhall riſe amidſt the fame of future times. The hunter ſhall ſhed a tear on my ſtone; and ſorrow dwell round the high-boſomed Bragéla. I fear not death, but I fear to fly, for Fingal ſaw me often victorious. Thou dim phantom of the hill, ſhew thyſelf to me! come on thy beam of heaven, and ſhew me my death in thine hand; yet will I not fly, thou feeble ſon of the wind. Go, ſon of Colgar, ſtrike the ſhield of Caithbat; it hangs between the ſpears. Let my heroes riſe to the ſound in the midſt of the battles of Erin. Though Fingal delays his coming with the race of the ſtormy hills; we ſhall fight, O Colgar's ſon, and die in the battle of heroes.

The ſound ſpreads wide; the heroes riſe, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave. They ſtood on the heath, like oaks with all their branches, round them (1); when they eccho to the ſtream of froſt, and their withered leaves ruſtle to the wind.

High Cromla's head of clouds is gray; the morning trembles on the half-enlightened ocean. The blue-gray miſt ſwims ſlowly by, and hides the ſons of Innis-fail.

(1)——As when heaven's fire
Hath ſcath'd the foreſt oaks, or mountain pines
With ſinged tops, their ſtately growth tho' bare
Stand on the blaſted heath. MILTON.

Riſe ye, ſaid the king of the dark-brown ſhields, ye that came from Lochlin's waves. The ſons of Erin have fled from our arms—purſue them over the plains of Lena.—And, Morla, go to Cormac's hall and bid them yield to Swaran; before the people ſhall fall into the tomb; and the hills of Ullin be ſilent.—They roſe like a flock of ſea-fowl when the waves expel them from the ſhore. Their ſound was like a thouſand ſtreams that meet in Cona's vale, when after a ſtormy night, they turn their dark eddies beneath the pale light of the morning.

As the dark ſhades of autumn fly over the hills of graſs; ſo gloomy, dark, ſucceſſive came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the ſtag of Morven moved on the king of groves. His ſhining ſhield is on his ſide like a flame on the heath at night, when the world is ſilent and dark, and the traveller ſees ſome ghoſt ſporting in the beam.

A blaſt from the troubled ocean removed the ſettled miſt. The ſons of Innis-fail appear like a ridge of rocks on the ſhore.

Go, Morla, go, ſaid Lochlin's king, and offer peace to theſe. Offer the terms we give to kings when nations bow before us. When the valiant are dead in war, and the virgins weeping on the field.

Great Morla came, the ſon of Swart;

and ſtately ſtrode the king of ſhields. He ſpoke to Erin's blue-eyed ſon, among the leſſer heroes.

Take Swaran's peace, the warrior ſpoke, the peace he gives to kings, when the nations bow before him. Leave Ullin's lovely plains to us, and give thy ſpouſe and dog. Thy ſpouſe high-boſom'd heaving fair. Thy dog that overtakes the wind. Give theſe to prove the weakneſs of thine arm, and live beneath our power.

Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, that Cuchullin never yields.—I give him the dark-blue rolling of ocean, or I give his people graves in Erin! Never ſhall a ſtranger have the lovely ſun-beam of Dunſcaich; nor ever deer fly on Lochlin's hills before the nimble-footed Luath.

Vain ruler of the car, ſaid Morla, wilt thou fight the king; that king whoſe ſhips of many groves could carry off thine Iſle? So little is thy green-hilled Ullin to the king of ſtormy waves.

In words I yield to many, Morla; but this ſword ſhall yield to none. Erin ſhall own the ſway of Cormac, while Connal and Cuchullin live. O Connal, firſt of mighty men, thou haſt heard the words of Morla; ſhall thy thoughts then be of peace, thou breaker of the ſhields? Spirit of fallen Crugal! why didſt thou threaten

us with death? The narrow houſe ſhall receive me in the midſt of the light of renown.—Exalt, ye ſons of Innis-fail, exalt the ſpear and bend the bow; rush on the foe in darkneſs, as the ſpirits of ſtormy nights.

Then diſmal, roaring, fierce and deep the gloom of battle rolled along; as miſt (1) that is poured on the valley, when ſtorms invade the ſilent ſun-ſhine of heaven. The chief moves before in arms, like an angry ghoſt before a cloud; when meteors incloſe him with fire; and the dark winds are in his hand.—Carril, far on the heath, bids the horn of battle ſound. He raiſes the voice of the ſong, and pours his ſoul into the minds of heroes.

Where, ſaid the mouth of the ſong, where is the fallen Crugal? He lies forgot on earth, and the hall of ſhells (2) is ſilent.—Sad is the ſpouſe of Crugal, for ſhe is a ſtranger (2) in the

(1) —— As evening miſt
Ris'n from a river o'er the marſh glides
And gathers ground faſt at the lab'rers heel
Homeward returning. MILTON.

(2) The ancient Scots, as well as the preſent Highlanders, drunk in ſhells; hence it is that we ſo often meet, in the old poetry, with the *chief of ſhells*, and *the halls of ſhells*.

(3) Crugal had married Degrena but a little time before the battle, conſequently ſhe may with propriety be called a ſtranger in the hall of her ſorrow.

hall of her ſorrow. But who is she, that, like a ſun-beam, flies before the ranks of the foe? It is Degrena (1), lovely fair, the ſpouſe of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on the wind behind. Her eye is red; her voice is shrill. Green, empty is thy Crugal now, his form is in the cave of the hill. He comes to the ear of reſt, and raiſes his feeble voice; like the humming of the mountain-bee, or collected flies of evening. But Degrena falls like a cloud of the morn; the ſword of Lochlin is in her ſide. Cairbar, she is fallen, the riſing thought of thy youth. She is fallen, O Cairbar, the thought of thy youthful hours.

Fierce Cairbar heard the mournful ſound, and rushed on like ocean's whale; he ſaw the death of his daughter; and roared in the midſt of thouſands (2). His ſpear met a ſon of Lochlin, and battle ſpread from wing to wing. As a hundred winds in Lochlin's groves, as fire in the firs of a hundred hills; ſo loud, ſo ruinous and vaſt the ranks of men are hewn down.—Cuchullin cut off heroes like thiſtles, and Swaran waſted Erin. Curach fell by his hand, and Cairbar of the boſſy shield. Morglan lies in laſting reſt; and Ca-olt quivers as he dies. His white breaſt is ſtained with his blood; and his yellow hair ſtretched in the duſt of his

(1) Deo-ghréna ſignifies a *ſun beam*.

(2) *Mediiſque in millibus ardet.* VIRG.

native land. He often had ſpread the feaſt where he fell; and often raiſed the voice of the harp: when his dogs leapt around for joy; and the youths of the chace prepared the bow.

Still Swaran advanced, as a ſtream that burſts from the deſart. The little hills are rolled in its courſe; and the rocks half-ſunk by its ſide. But Cuchullin ſtood before him like a hill (1), that catches the clouds of heaven.—The winds contend on its head of pines; and the hail rattles on its rocks. But, firm in its ſtrength, it ſtands and ſhades the ſilent vale of Cona.

So Cuchullin ſhaded the ſons of Erin, and ſtood in the midſt of thouſands. Blood riſes

(1) Virgil and Milton have made uſe of a compariſon ſimilar to this; I ſhall lay both before the reader, and let him judge for himſelf which of theſe two great poets have beſt ſucceeded.

Quantus Athos, aut quantus Erix, aut ipſe coruſcis,
Cum fremit ilicibus, quantus gaudetque nivali
Vertice ſe attollens pater Appeninus ad auras.
Like Erix or like Athos great he ſhews
Or father Appenine when white with ſnows,
His head divine obſcure in clouds he hides,
And ſhakes the ſounding foreſt on his ſides.
DRYDEN.

On th' other ſide Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated ſtood
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:
His ſtature reach'd the ſky. MILTON.

like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around him. Bus Erin falls on either wing like ſnow in the day of the ſun.

O ſons of Innis-fail, ſaid Grumal. Lochlin conquers on the field. Why ſtrive we as reeds againſt the wind? Fly to the hill of dark-brown hinds. He fled like the ſtag of Morven, and his ſpear is a trembling beam of light behind him. Few fled with Grumal, the chief of the little ſoul: they fell in the battle of heroes on Lena's echoing heath.

High on his car, of many gems, the chief of Erin ſtood; he ſlew a mighty ſon of Lochlin, and ſpoke, in haſte, to Connal. O Connal, firſt of mortal men, thou haſt taught this arm of death! Though Erin's ſons have fled, ſhall we not fight the foe? O Carril, ſon of other times, carry my living friends to that bushy hill.—Here, Connal, let us ſtand like rocks, and ſave our flying friends.

Connal mounts the car of light. They ſtretch their ſhields like the darkened moon, the daughter of the ſtarry ſkies, when ſhe moves a dun circle, through heaven. Sithfadda panted up the hill, and Duſronnel haughty ſteed. Like waves behind a whale, behind them rushed the foe.

Now on the riſing ſide of Cromla ſtood Erin's few ſad ſons; like a grove through which the flame had rushed, hurried on by

the winds of the ſtormy night.—Cuchullin ſtood beſide an oak. He rolled his red eye in ſilence, and heard the wind in his bushy hair; when the ſcout of ocean came, Moran the ſon of Fithil.—The ships, he cried, the ships of the lonely iſle! There Fingal comes, the firſt of men, the breaker of the shields. The waves foam before his black prows. His maſts with ſails are like groves in clouds.

Blow, ſaid Cuchullin, all ye winds that rush over my iſle of lovely miſt. Come to the death of thouſands, O chief of the hills of hinds. Thy ſails, my friend, are to me like the clouds of the morning; and thy ships like the light of heaven; and thou thyſelf like a pillar of fire that giveth light in the night. O Connal, firſt of men, how pleaſant are our friends! But the night is gathering around; where now are the ships of Fingal? Here let us paſs the hours of darkneſs, and wish for the moon of heaven.

The winds came down on the woods. The torrents rushed from the rocks. Rain gathered round the head of Cromla And the red ſtars trembled between the flying clouds. Sad, by the ſide of a ſtream whoſe ſound was echoed by a tree, ſad by the ſide of a ſtream the chief of Erin ſat. Connal ſon of Colgar was there, and Carril of other times.

Unhappy is the hand of Cuchullin, ſaid the ſon of Semo, unhappy is the hand of Cuchullin ſince he ſlew his friend.—Ferda, thou ſon of Damman, I loved thee as myſelf.

How, Cuchullin, ſon of Semo, fell the breaker of the shields? Well I remember, ſaid Connal, the noble ſon of Damman. Tall and fair he was like the rain-bow of the hill.

Ferda from Albion came, the chief of a hundred hills. In Muri's (1) hall he learned the ſword, and won the friendship of Cuchullin. We moved to the chace together; and one was our bed in the heath.

Deugala was the ſpouſe of Cairbar, chief of the plains of Ullin. She was covered with the light of beauty, but her heart was the houſe of pride. She loved that ſun-beam of youth, the noble ſon of Damman. Cairbar, ſaid the white-armed woman, give me half of the herd. No more I will remain in your halls. Divide the herd, dark Cairbar.

Let Cuchullin, ſaid Cairbar, divide my herd

(1) Muri, ſay the Irish bards, was an academy in Ulſter for teaching the uſe of arms. The ſignification of the word is a *cluſter of people*; which renders the opinion probable. Cuchullin is ſaid to have been the firſt who introduced into Ireland complete armour of ſteel. He is famous, among the Senachies, for teaching horſemanship to the Irish, and for being the firſt who uſed a chariot

on the hill. His breaſt is the ſeat of juſtice. Depart, thou light of beauty.—I went and divided the herd. One ſnow-white bull remained. I gave that bull to Cairbar. The wrath of Deugala roſe.

Son of Damman, begun the fair, Cuchullin pains my ſoul. I muſt hear of his death, or Lubar's ſtream ſhall roll over me. My pale ghoſt ſhall wander near thee, and mourn the wound of my pride. Pour out the blood of Cuchullin, or pierce this heaving breaſt.

Deugala, ſaid the fair-haired youth, how ſhall I ſlay the ſon of Semo? He is the friend of my ſecret thoughts, and ſhall I lift the ſword? She wept three days before him, on the fourth he conſented to fight.

I will fight my friend, Deugala! but may I fall by his ſword. Could I wander on the hill and behold the grave of Cuchullin? We fought on the hills of Muri. Our ſwords avoid a wound. They ſlide on the helmets of ſteel; and ſound on the ſlippery ſhields. Deugala was near with a ſmile, and ſaid to the ſon of Damman, thine arm is feeble, thou ſunbeam of youth. Thy years are not ſtrong for

in that kingdom; which laſt circumſtance was the occaſion of Oſſian's being ſo circumſtantial in his deſcription of Cuchullin's car, in the firſt book.

ſteel.—Yield to the ſon of Semo. He is like the rock of Malmor.

The tear is in the eye of youth. He faultering ſaid to me, Cuchullin, raiſe thy boſſy ſhield. Defend thee from the hand of thy friend. My ſoul is laden with grief: for I muſt ſlay the chief of men.

I ſighed as the wind in the chink of a rock. I lifted high the edge of my ſteel. The ſun-beam of the battle fell; the firſt of Cuchullin's friends.

Unhappy is the hand of Cuchullin ſince the hero fell.

Mournful is thy tale, ſon of the car, ſaid Carril of other times. It ſends my ſoul back to the ages of old, and to the days of other years. —Often have I heard of Comal who ſlew the friend he loved; yet victory attended his ſteel; and the battle was conſumed in his preſence.

Comal was a ſon of Albion; the chief of an hundred hills. His deer drunk of a thouſand ſtreams. A thouſand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildneſs of youth. His hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was she! the daughter of migthy Conloch. She appeared like a ſun-beam among women. And her hair was like the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chace.

Her

Her bow-ſtring ſounded on the winds of the foreſt. Her ſoul was fixed on Comal. Often met their eyes of love. Their courſe in the chace was one, and happy were their words in ſecret.—But Gormal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Ardven. He watched her lone ſteps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal.

One day, tired of the chace, when the miſt had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met in the cave of Ronan (1). It was the wonted haunt of Comal. Its ſides were hung with his arms. A hundred ſhields of thongs were there; a hundred helms of ſounding ſteel.

Reſt here, he ſaid, my love Galvina; thou light of the cave of Ronan. A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go; but I will ſoon return. I fear, she ſaid, dark Gormal my foe; he

(1) The unfortunate death of this Ronan is the ſubject of the ninth fragment of ancient poetry published laſt year; it is not the work of Oſſian, though it is writ in his manner, and bears the genuine marks of antiquity. —The conciſe expreſſions of Oſſian are imitated, but the thoughts are too jejune and confined to be the production of that poet.——Many poems go under his name that have been evidently compoſed ſince his time; they are very numerous in Ireland, and ſome have come to the tranſlator's hands. They are trivial and dull to the laſt degree; ſwelling into ridiculous bombaſt, or ſinking into the loweſt kind of proſaic ſtyle.

haunts the cave of Ronan. I will reſt among the arms; but ſoon return, my love.

He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She cloathed her white ſides with his armour, and ſtrode from the cave of Ronan. He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high. His colour changed, and darkneſs dimmed his eyes. He drew the bow. The arrow flew. Galvina fell in blood. He run with wildneſs in his ſteps and called the daughter of Conloch. No anſwer in the lonely rock. Where art thou, O my love! He ſaw, at length, her heaving heart beating around the feathered dart. O Conloch's daughter, is it thou? He ſunk upon her breaſt.

The hunters found the hapleſs pair; he afterwards walked the hill. But many and ſilent were his ſteps round the dark dwelling of his love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought; the ſtrangers fled. He ſearched for his death over the field. But who could kill the mighty Comal! He threw away his dark-brown ſhield. An arrow found his manly breaſt. He ſleeps with his loved Galvina at the noiſe of the ſounding ſurge. Their green tombs are ſeen by the mariner, when he bounds on the waves of the north.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK III.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT to Book III.

Cuchullin, pleased with the story of Carril, insists with that bard for more of his songs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and death of Agandecca the beautiful sister of Swaran. He had scarce finished, when Calmar the son of Matha, who had advised the first battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's design to surprise the remains of the Irish army. He himself proposes to withstand singly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow pass, till the Irish should make good their retreat. Cuchullin, touched with the gallant proposal of Calmar, resolves to accompany him, and orders Carril to carry off the few that remained of the Irish. Morning comes, Calmar dies of his wounds; and, the ships of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the pursuit of the Irish, and returns to oppose Fingal's landing. Cuchullin ashamed, after his defeat to appear before Fingal, retires to the cave of Tura. Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of night makes the victory not decisive. The king, who had observed the gallant behaviour of his grandson Oscar, gives him advices concerning his conduct in peace and war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes, as the best model for his conduct; which introduces the

episode concerning Fainasollis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken under his protection, in his youth. Fillan and Oscar are dispatched to observe the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul the son of Morni desires the command of the army, in the next battle; which Fingal promises to give him. Some general reflections of the poet close the third day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK III. (1)

PLEASANT are the words of the ſong, ſaid Cuchullin, and lovely are the tales of other times. They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes, when the ſun is faint on its ſide, and the lake is ſettled and blue in the vale. O Carril, raiſe again thy voice, and let me hear the ſong of Tura, which was ſung in my halls of joy, when Fingal king of ſhields was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers.

Fingal! thou man of battle, ſaid Carril,

(1) The ſecond night, ſince the opening of the poem, continues; and Cuchullin, Connal, and Carril ſtill ſit in the place deſcribed in the preceding book. The ſtory of Agandecca is introduced here with propriety, as great uſe is made of it in the courſe of the poem, and as it, in ſome meaſure, brings about the cataſtrophe.

early were thy deeds in arms. Lochlin was conſumed in thy wrath, when thy youth ſtrove with the beauty of maids. They ſmiled at the fair-blooming face of the hero; but death was in his hands. He was ſtrong as the waters of Lora. His followers were like the roar of a thouſand ſtreams. They took the king of Lochlin in battle, but reſtored him to his ſhips. His big heart ſwelled with pride; and the death of the youth was dark in his ſoul.—For none ever, but Fingal, overcame the ſtrength of the mighty Starno (1).

He ſat in the halls of his ſhells in Lochlin's woody land. He called the grey-haired Snivan, that often ſung round the circle (2) of Loda: when the ſtone of power heard his cry, and the battle turned in the field of the valiant.

Go; gray-haired Snivan, Starno ſaid, to Ardven's ſea-ſurrounded rocks. Tell to Fingal king of the deſart; he that is the faireſt among his thouſands, tell him I give him

(1) Starno was the father of Swaran as well as of Agandecca.—His fierce and cruel character is well marked in other poems concerning the times.

(2) This paſſage moſt certainly alludes to the religion of Lochlin, and *the ſtone of power* here mentioned is the image of one of the deities of Scandanavia.

my daughter, the loveliest maid that ever heaved a breast of snow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves. Her soul is generous and mild. Let him come with his braveſt heroes to the daughter of the ſecret hall.

Snivan came to Albion's windy hills: and fair-haired Fingal went. His kindled ſoul flew before him, as he bounded on the waves of the north.

Welcome, ſaid the dark-brown Starno, welcome, king of rocky Morven; and ye, his heroes of might, ſons of the lonely iſle! Three days within my halls ſhall ye feaſt; and three days purſue my boars, that your fame may reach the maid that dwells in the ſecret hall.

The king of ſnow (1) deſigned their death, and gave the feaſt of ſhells. Fingal, who doubted the foe, kept on his arms of ſteel. The ſons of death were afraid, and fled from the eyes of the hero. The voice of ſprightly mirth aroſe. The trembling harps of joy are ſtrung. Bards ſing the battle of heroes; or the heaving breaſt of love.—Uſſin, Fingal's bard, was there; the ſweet voice of the hill of Cona. He praiſed the

(1) Starno is here poetically called the king of ſnow from the great quantities of ſnow that fall in his dominions.

daughter of ſnow; and Morven's (1) high-deſcended chief.—The daughter of ſnow over-heard, and left the hall of her ſecret ſigh. She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the eaſt.—Lovelineſs was around her as light. Her ſteps were like the muſic of ſongs. She ſaw the youth and loved him. He was the ſtolen ſigh of her ſoul. Her blue eye rolled on him in ſecret: and she bleſt the chief of Morven.

The third day, with all its beams, shone bright on the wood of boars. Forth moved the dark-browed Starno, and Fingal, king of shields. Half the day they ſpent in the chace; and the ſpear of Fingal was red in the blood of Gormal (2).

It was then the daughter of Starno, with blue eyes rolling in tears, came with her voice of love, and ſpoke to the king of Morven.

Fingal, high-deſcended chief, truſt not Starno's heart of pride. Within that wood he has placed his chiefs; beware of the wood

(1) All the North-weſt coaſt of Scotland probably went of old under the name of Morven, which ſignifies a ridge of very high hills.

(2) Gormal is the name of a hill in Lochlin, in the neighbourhood of Starno's palace.

of death. But, remember, ſon of the hill, remember Agandecca: ſave me from the wrath of my father, king of the windy Morven!

The youth, with unconcern, went on; his heroes by his ſide. The ſons of death fell by his hand; and Gormal echoed around.

Before the halls of Starno the ſons of the chace convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds. His eyes like meteors of night. Bring hither, he cries, Agandecca to her lovely king of Morven. His hand is ſtained with the blood of my people; and her words have not been in vain.—

She came with the red eye of tears. She came with her looſe raven locks. Her white breaſt heaved with ſighs, like the foam of the ſtreamy Lubar. Starno pierced her ſide with ſteel. She fell like a wreath of ſnow that ſlides from the rocks of Ronan, when the woods are ſtill, and the echo deepens in the vale.

Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms. The gloom of the battle roared, and Lochlin fled or died.—Pale, in his bounding ship he cloſed the maid of the raven hair. Her tomb aſcends on Ardven, and the ſea roars round the dark dwelling of Agandecca.

Bleſſed be her ſoul, ſaid Cuchullin, and

bleſſed be the mouth of the ſong.—Strong was the youth of Fingal, and ſtrong is his arm of age. Lochlin ſhall fall again before the king of echoing Morven. Shew thy face from a cloud, O moon; light his white ſails on the wave of the night. And if any ſtrong ſpirit (1) of heaven ſits on that low-hung cloud; turn his dark ſhips from the rock, thou rider of the ſtorm!

Such were the words of Cuchullin at the ſound of the mountain-ſtream, when Calmar aſcended the hill, the wounded ſon of Matha. From the field he came in his blood. He leaned on his bending ſpear. Feeble is the arm of battle! but ſtrong the ſoul of the hero!

Welcome! O ſon of Matha, ſaid Connal, welcome art thou to thy friends! Why burſts that broken ſigh from the breaſt of him that never feared before?

And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed ſteel. My ſoul brightens in danger, and exults in the noiſe of battle. I am of the race of ſteel; my fathers never feared.

(1) This is the only paſſage in the poem that has the appearance of religion.——But Cuchullin's apoſtrophe to this ſpirit is accompanied with a doubt; ſo that it is not eaſy to determine whether the hero meant a ſuperior being, or the ghoſts of deceaſed warriors, who where ſuppoſed in thoſe times to rule the ſtorms, and to tranſport themſelves in a guſt of wind from one country to another.

Cormar was the firſt of my race. He ſported through the ſtorms of the waves. His black skiff bounded on ocean, and travelled on the wings of the blaſt. A ſpirit once embroiled the night. Seas ſwell, and rocks reſound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared and came to land: then blushed that he feared at all. He rushed again among the waves to find the ſon of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark; he ſtood with the ſword unsheathed. When the low-hung vapour paſſed, he took it by the curling head, and ſearched its dark womb with his ſteel. The ſon of the wind forſook the air. The moon and ſtars returned.

Such was the boldneſs of my race; and Calmar is like his fathers. Danger flies from the uplifted ſword. They beſt ſucceed who dare.

But now, ye ſons of green-vallyed Erin; retire from Lena's bloody heath. Collect the ſad remnant of our friends, and join the ſword of Fingal. I heard the ſound of Lochlin's advancing arms; but Calmar will remain and fight. My voice ſhall be ſuch, my friends, as if thouſands were behind me. But, ſon of Semo, remember me. Remember Calmar's lifeleſs corſe. After Fingal has waſted the field, place me by ſome ſtone of remembrance, that future times may hear

my fame; and the mother (1) of Calmar rejoice over the ſtone of my renown.

No: ſon of Matha, ſaid Cuchullin, I will never leave thee. My joy is in the unequal field: my ſoul increaſes in danger. Connal, and Carril of other times, carry off the ſad ſons of Erin; and when the battle is over, ſearch for our pale corſes in this narrow way. For near this oak we shall ſtand in the ſtream of the battle of thouſands.—O Fithil's ſon, with feet of wind, fly over the heath of Lena. Tell to Fingal that Erin is inthralled, and bid the king of Morven haſten. O let him come like the ſun in a ſtorm, when he shines on the hills of graſs.

Morning is gray on Cromla; the ſons of the ſea aſcend. Calmar ſtood forth to meet them in the pride of his kindling ſoul. But pale was the face of the warrior; he leaned on his father's ſpear; that ſpear which he brought from Lara's hall, when the ſoul of his mother was ſad.—But ſlowly now the hero falls like a tree on the plains of Cona. Dark Cuchullin ſtands alone like a rock (2) in a ſandy vale. The ſea comes with

(1) Alclétha, her lamentation over her ſon is introduced in the poem concerning the death of Cuchullin, printed in this collection.

(2) ——ἠΰτε πέτρη
Ηλίβατος, μεγάλη, πολιῆς ἁλὸς ἐγγὺς ἐοῦσα, &c.

Hom. Il. 15 v. 619.

its waves, and roars on its hardened ſides. Its head is covered with foam, and the hills are echoing around. — Now from the gray miſt of the ocean, the white-ſailed ſhips of Fingal appear. High is the grove of their maſts as they nod, by turns, on the rolling wave.

Swaran ſaw them from the hill, and returned from the ſons of Erin. As ebbs the reſounding ſea through the hundred iſles of Iniſtore; ſo loud, ſo vaſt, ſo immenſe returned the ſons of Lochlin againſt the king of the deſert hill. But bending, weeping, ſad, and ſlow, and dragging his long ſpear behind, Cuchullin ſunk in Cromla's wood, and mourned his fallen friends. He feared the face of Fingal, who was wont to greet him from the fields of renown.

How many lie there of my heroes! the chiefs of Innis-fail! they that were chearful in the hall when the ſound of the ſhells aroſe. No more ſhall I find their ſteps in the heath, or hear their voice in the chace of the hinds. Pale, ſilent, low on bloody beds are they who were my friends! O ſpirits

So ſome tall rock o'erhangs the hoary main,
By winds aſſail'd, by billows beat in vain,
Unmov'd it hears, above, the tempeſts blow,
And ſees the watry mountains break below, POPE.

of the lately-dead, meet Cuchullin on his heath. Converſe with him on the wind, when the ruſtling tree of Tura's cave reſounds. There, far remote, I ſhall lie unknown. No bard ſhall hear of me. No gray ſtone ſhall riſe to my renown. Mourn me with the dead, O Bragela! departed is my fame.

Such were the words of Cuchullin when he ſunk in the woods of Cromla.

Fingal, tall in his ſhip, ſtretched his bright lance before him. Terrible was the gleam of the ſteel: it was like the green meteor of death, ſetting in the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is alone, and the broad moon is darkened in heaven.

The battle is over, ſaid the king, and I behold the blood of my friends. Sad is the heath of Lena; and mournful the oaks of Cromla: the hunters have fallen there in their ſtrength; and the ſon of Semo is no more. — Ryno and Fillan, my ſons, ſound the horn of Fingal's war. Aſcend that hill on the ſhore, and call the children of the foe. Call them from the grave of Lamdarg, the chief of other times. — Be your voice like that of your father, when he enters the battles of his ſtrength. I wait for the dark mighty man; I wait on Lena's ſhore for Swaran. And let him come with all his race; for ſtrong in battle are the friends of the dead.

Fair Ryno flew like lightning; dark Fillan as the shade of autumn. On Lena's heath their voice is heard; the ſons of ocean heard the horn of Fingal's war. As the roaring eddy of ocean returning from the kingdom of ſnows; ſo ſtrong, ſo dark, ſo ſudden came down the ſons of Lochlin. The king in their front appears in the diſmal pride of his arms. Wrath burns in his dark-brown face: and his eyes roll in the fire of his valour.

Fingal beheld the ſon of Starno; and he remembered Agandecca. — For Swaran with the tears of youth had mourned his white-boſomed ſiſter. He ſent Ullin of the ſongs to bid him to the feaſt of ſhells. For pleaſant on Fingal's ſoul returned the remembrance of the firſt of his loves.

Ullin came with aged ſteps, and ſpoke to Starno's ſon. O thou that dwelleſt afar, ſurrounded, like a rock, with thy waves, come to the feaſt of the king, and paſs the day in reſt. To-morrow let us fight, O Swaran, and break the echoing ſhields.

To-day, ſaid Starno's wrathful ſon, we break the echoing ſhields: to-morrow my feaſt will be ſpread; and Fingal lie on earth.

And to-morrow let his feaſt be ſpread, ſaid Fingal with a ſmile; for to-day, O

my ſons, we ſhall break the echoing ſhields. —Oſſian, ſtand thou near my arm. Gaul, lift thy terrible ſword. Fergus bend thy crooked yew. Throw, Fillan, thy lance through heaven.—Lift your ſhields like the darkened moon. Be your ſpears the meteors of death. Follow me in the path of my fame; and equal my deeds in battle.

As a hundred winds on Morven; as the ſtreams of a hundred hills; as clouds fly ſucceſſive over heaven; or, as the dark ocean aſſaults the ſhore of the deſert: ſo roaring, ſo vaſt, ſo terrible the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath. — The groan of the people ſpread over the hills; it was like the thunder of night, when the cloud burſts on Cona; and a thouſand ghoſts ſhriek at once on the hollow wind.

Fingal rushed on in his ſtrength, terrible as the ſpirit of Trenmor; when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven to ſee the children of his pride. The oaks reſound on their hills, and the rocks fall down before him.—Bloody was the hand of my father, when he whirled the lightning of his ſword. He remembers the battles of his youth, and the field is waſted in his courſe.

Ryno went on like a pillar of fire—Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus rushed forward

with feet of wind; and Fillan like the miſt of the hill.—Myſelf (1), like a rock, came down, I exulted in the ſtrength of the king. Many were the deaths of my arm; and diſmal was the gleam of my ſword. My locks were not then ſo gray; nor trembled my hands of age. My eyes were not cloſed in darkneſs; nor failed my feet in the race.

Who can relate the deaths of the people; or the deeds of mighty heroes; when Fingal, burning in his wrath, conſumed the ſons of the Lochlin? Groans ſwelled on groans from hill to hill, till night had covered all. Pale, ſtaring like a herd of deer, the ſons of Lochlin convene on Lena.

We ſat and heard the ſprightly harp at Lubar's gentle ſtream. Fingal himſelf was next to the foe; and liſtened to the tales of bards. His godlike race were in the ſong, the chiefs of other times. Attentive, leaning on his ſhield, the king of Morven ſat. The wind whiſtled through his aged locks, and his thoughts are of the days of other years. Near him on his bending ſpear, my young, my lovely Oſcar ſtood. He admired the king

(1) Here the poet celebrates his own actions, but he does it in ſuch a manner that we are not diſpleaſed. The mention of the great actions of his youth immediately ſuggeſts to him the helpleſs ſituation of his age. We do not deſpiſe him for ſelfiſh praiſe, but feel his misfortune.

of Morven: and his actions were ſwelling in his ſoul.

Son of my ſon, begun the king, O Oſcar, pride of youth, I ſaw the ſhining of thy ſword and gloried in my race. Purſue the glory of our fathers, and be what they have been; when Trenmor lived, the firſt of men, and Trathal the father of heroes. They fought the battle in their youth, and are the ſong of bards.— O Oſcar! bend the ſtrong in arms: but ſpare the feeble hand. Be thou a ſtream of many tides againſt the foes of thy people; but like the gale that moves the graſs to thoſe who ask thine aid. —So Trenmor lived; ſuch Trathal was; and ſuch has Fingal been. My arm was the ſupport of the injured and the weak reſted behind the lightning of my ſteel.

Oſcar! I was young like thee, when lovely Fainaſollis came, that ſun-beam! that mild light of love! the daughter of Craca's (1) king! I then returned from Gona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-ſailed boat appeared far off; we ſaw it like a miſt that rode on ocean's blaſt. It ſoon ap-

(1) What the Craca here mentioned was, is not, at this diſtance of time, eaſy to determine. The moſt probable opinion is, that it was one of the Shetland iſles. —— There is a ſtory concerning a daughter of the king of Craca in the ſixth book.

proached; we ſaw the fair. Her white breaſt heaved with ſighs. The wind was in her looſe dark hair; her roſy cheek had tears. —Daughter of beauty, calm I ſaid, what ſigh is in that breaſt? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the ſea? My ſword is not unmatched in war, but dauntleſs is my heart.

To thee I fly, with ſighs she replied, O chief of mighty men! To thee I fly, chief of ſhells, ſupporter of the feeble hand! The king of Craca's echoing iſle owned me the ſun-beam of his race. And often did the hills of Cromala reply to the ſighs of love for the unhappy Fainaſollis. Sora's chief beheld me fair; and loved the daughter of Craca. His ſword is like a beam of light upon the warrior's ſide. But dark is his brow; and tempeſts are in his ſoul. I ſhun him on the rolling ſea; but Sora's chief purſues.

Reſt thou, I ſaid, behind my ſhield; reſt in peace, thou beam of light! The gloomy chief of Sora will fly, if Fingal's arm is like his ſoul. In ſome lone cave I might conceal thee, daughter of the ſea! But Fingal never flies; for where the danger threatens, I rejoice in the ſtorm of ſpears. — I ſaw the tears upon her cheek. I pitied Craca's fair.

Now, like a dreadful wave afar, appea-

red the ship of ſtormy Borbar. His maſts high-bended over the ſea behind their sheets of ſnow. White roll the waters on either ſide. The ſtrength of ocean ſounds. Come thou, I ſaid, from the roar of ocean, thou rider of the ſtorm. Partake the feaſt within my hall. It is the houſe of ſtrangers.—The maid ſtood trembling by my ſide; he drew the bow: she fell. Unerring is thy hand, I ſaid, but feeble was the foe. —We fought, nor weak was the ſtrife of death: He ſunk beneath my ſword. We laid them in two tombs of ſtones; the unhappy children of youth.

Such have I been in my youth, O Oſcar; be thou like the age of Fingal. Never ſeek the battle, nor shun it when it comes.—Fillan and Oſcar of the dark-brown hair, ye children of the race; fly over the heath of roaring winds; and view the ſons of Lochlin. Far off I hear the noiſe of their fear, like the ſtorms of echoing Cona. Go: that they may not fly my ſword along the waves of the north.—For many chiefs of Erin's race lie here on the dark bed of death. The children of the ſtorm are low; the ſons of echoing Cromla.

The heroes flew like two dark clouds; two dark clouds that are the chariots of ghoſts; when air's dark children come to frighten hapleſs men.

It was then that Gaul (1), the ſon of Morni, ſtood like a rock in the night. His ſpear is glittering to the ſtars; his voice like many ſtreams.— Son of battle, cried the chief, O Fingal, king of ſhells! let the bards of many ſongs ſooth Erin's friends to reſt. And, Fingal, ſheath thy ſword of death; and let thy people fight. We wither away without our fame; for our king is the only breaker of ſhields. When morning riſes on our hills, behold at a diſtance our deeds. Let Lochlin feel the ſword of Morni's ſon, that bards may ſing of me. Such was the cuſtom heretofore of Fingal's noble race. Such was thine own, thou king of ſwords, in battles of the ſpear.

O ſon of Morni, Fingal replied, I glory in thy fame.—Fight; but my ſpear ſhall be near to aid thee in the midſt of danger. Raiſe, raiſe the voice, ſons of the ſong, and lull me into reſt. Here will Fingal lie

(1) Gaul the ſon of Morni, was chief of a tribe that diſputed long the pre-eminence, with Fingal himſelf. They were reduced at laſt to obedience, and Gaul, from an enemy, turned Fingal's beſt friend and greateſt hero. His character is ſomething like that of Ajax in the Iliad; a hero of more ſtrength than conduct in battle. He was very fond of military fame, and here he demands the next battle to himſelf. —— The poet, by an artifice, removes Fingal, that his return may be the more magnificent.

amidſt the wind of night.—And if thou, Agandecca, art near, among the children of thy land; if thou ſitteſt on a blaſt of wind among the high-shrowded maſts of Lochlin, come to my dreams (1), my fair one, and shew thy bright face to my ſoul.

Many a voice and many a harp in tuneful ſounds aroſe. Of Fingal's noble deeds they ſung, and of the noble race of the hero. And ſometimes on the lovely ſound was heard the name of the now mournful Oſſian.

Often have I fought, and often won in battles of the ſpeear. But blind, and tearful, and forlorn I now walk with little men. O Fingal, with thy race of battle I now behold thee not. The wild roes feed upon the green tomb of the mighty king of Morven.—Bleſt be thy ſoul, thou king of ſwords, thou moſt renowned on the hills of Cona!

(1) The poet prepares us for the dream of Fingal in the next book.

FINGAL,

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT to Book IV.

The action of the poem being ſuſpended by night, Oſſian takes that opportunity to relate his own actions at the lake of Lego, and his courtship of Evirallin, who was the mother of Oſcar, and had died ſome time before the expedition of Fingal into Ireland. Her ghoſt appears to him, and tells him that Oſcar, who had been ſent, at the beginning of the night, to obſerve the enemy, was engaged with an advanced party, and almoſt overpowered. Oſſian relieves his ſon; and an alarm is given to Fingal of the approach of Swaran. The king riſes, calls his army together, and, as he had promiſed the preceding night, devolves the command on Gaul the ſon of Morni, while he himſelf, after charging his ſons to behave gallantly, and defend his people, retires to a hill, from whence he could have a view of the battle. The battle joins; the poet relates Oſcar's great actions. But when Oſcar, in conjunction with his father, conquered in one wing, Gaul, who was attacked by Swaran in perſon, was on the point of retreating in the other. Fingal ſends Ullin his bard to encourage him with a war ſong; but notwithſtanding Swaran prevails; and Gaul and his army are obliged to give way. Fingal, deſcending from the hill, rallies them again: Swaran deſiſts from the pur-

ſuit, poſſeſſes himſelf of a riſing ground, reſtores the ranks, and waits the approach of Fingal. The king, having encouraged his men, gives the neceſſary orders, and renews the battle. Cuchullin, who, with his friend Connal, and Carril his bard, had retired to the cave of Tura, hearing the noiſe, came to the brow of the hill, which overlooked the field of battle, where he ſaw Fingal engaged with the enemy. He, being hindered by Connal from joining Fingal, who was himſelf upon the point of obtaining a complete victory, ſends Carril to congratulate that hero on his ſucceſs.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK IV. (1)

WHO comes with her ſongs from the mountain, like the bow of the ſhowery Lena? It is the maid of the voice of love. The white-armed daughter of Toſcar. Often haſt thou heard my ſong, and given the tear of beauty. Doſt thou come to the battles

(1) Fingal being aſleep, and the action ſuſpended by night, the poet introduces the ſtory of his courtſhip of Evirallin, the daughter of Branno. The epiſode is neceſſary to clear up ſeveral paſſages that follow in the poem; at the ſame time that it naturally brings on the action of the book, which may be ſuppoſed to begin about the middle of the third night from the opening of the poem.——This book, as many of Oſſian's other compoſitions, is addreſſed to the beautiful Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar. She appears to have been in love with Oſcar, and to have affected the company of the father, after the death of the ſon.

of thy people, and to hear the actions of Oſcar? When ſhall I ceaſe to mourn by the ſtreams of the echoing Cona? My years have paſſed away in battle, and my age is darkened with ſorrow.

Daughter of the hand of ſnow! I was not ſo mournful and blind; I was not ſo dark and forlorn, when Evirallin loved me, Evirallin with the dark-brown hair, the white-boſomed love of Cormac. A thouſand heroes ſought the maid, ſhe denied her love to a thouſand; the ſons of the ſword were deſpiſed; for graceful in her eyes was Oſſian.

I went in ſuit of the maid to Lego's ſable ſurge; twelve of my people were there, the ſons of the ſtreamy Morven. We came to Branno friend of ſtrangers: Branno of the ſounding mail.—From whence, he ſaid, are the arms of ſteel? Not eaſy to win is the maid that has denied the blue-eyed ſons of Erin. But bleſt be thou, O ſon of Fingal; happy is the maid that waits thee. Tho' twelve daughters of beauty were mine, thine were the choice, thou ſon of fame! —Then he opened the hall of the maid, the dark-haired Evirallin. Joy kindled in our breaſts of ſteel, and bleſt the maid of Branno.

Above us on the hill appeared the people of ſtately Cormac. Eight were the heroes of the

chief; and the heath flamed with their arms. There Colla, Durra of the wounds, there mighty Toſcar, and Tago, there Freſtal, the victorious, ſtood; Dairo of the happy deeds, and Dala, the battle's bulwark in the narrow way.—The ſword flamed in the hand of Cormac, and graceful was the look of the hero.

Eight were the heroes of Oſſian; Ullin ſtormy ſon of war; Mullo of the generous deeds; the noble, the graceful Scelacha; Oglan, and Cerdal the wrathful, and Duma-riccan's brows of death. And why ſhould Ogar be the laſt; ſo wide renowned on the hills of Ardven?

Ogar met Dala the ſtrong, face to face, on the field of heroes. The battle of the chiefs was like the wind on ocean's foamy wave. The dagger is remembered by Ogar; the weapon which he loved; nine times he drowned it in Dala's ſide. The ſtormy battle turned. Three times I pierced Cormac's ſhield: three times he broke his ſpear. But, unhappy youth of love! I cut his head away.—Five times I ſhook it by the lock. The friends of Cormac fled.

Whoever would have told me, lovely maid (1), when then I ſtrove in battle; that

(1) The poet addreſſes himſelf to Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar.

blind, forſaken, and forlorn I now ſhould paſs the night; firm ought his mail to have been, and unmatched his arm in battle.

(1) Now on Lena's gloomy heath the voice of muſic died away. The unconſtant blaſt blew hard, and the high oak ſhook its leaves around me; of Evirallin were my thoughts, when ſhe, in all the light of beauty, and her blue eyes rolling in tears, ſtood on a cloud before my ſight, and ſpoke with feeble voice.

O Oſſian, riſe and ſave my ſon; ſave Oſcar chief of men: near the red oak of Lubar's ſtream, he fights with Lochlin's ſons. —She ſunk into her cloud again. I clothed me with my ſteel. My ſpear ſupported my ſteps, and my rattling armour rung. I hummed, as I was wont in danger, the ſongs of heroes of old. Like diſtant thunder (2)

(1) The poet returns to his ſubject. If one could fix the time of the year in which the action of the poem happened, from the ſcene deſcribed here, I ſhould be tempted to place it in autumn. —— The trees ſhed their leaves, and the winds are variable, both which circumſtances agree with that ſeaſon of the year.

(2) Oſſian gives the reader a high idea of himſelf. His very ſong frightens the enemy. This paſſage reſembles one in the eighteenth Iliad, where the voice of Achilles frightens the Trojans from the body of Patroclus.

Lochlin heard; they fled; my ſon purſued.

I called him like a diſtant ſtream: My ſon return over Lena. No further purſue the foe, though Oſſian is behind thee. — He came; and lovely in my ear was Oſcar's ſounding ſteel. Why didſt thou ſtop my hand, he ſaid, till death had covered all? For dark and dreadful, by the ſtream, they met thy ſon and Fillan. They watched the terrors of the night. Our ſwords have conquered ſome. But as the winds of night pour the ocean over the white ſands of Mora, ſo dark advance the ſons of Lochlin over Lena's ruſtling heath. The ghoſts of night ſhriek afar; and I have ſeen the meteors of death. Let me awake the king of Morven, he that ſmiles in danger; for he is like the ſon of heaven that riſes in a ſtorm.

Fingal had ſtarted from a dream, and leaned on Trenmor's ſhield; the dark-brown ſhield of his fathers; which they had lifted of old in the battles of their race. — The hero had ſeen in his reſt the mournful form

Forth march'd the chief, and diſtant from the crowd,
High on the rampart, rais'd his voice aloud.
So high his brazen voice the hero rear'd,
Hoſts drop their arms and trembled as they fear'd.

POPE.

of Agandecca; she came from the way of the ocean, and ſlowly, lonely, moved over Lena. Her face was pale like the miſt of Cromla; and dark were the tears of her cheek. She often raiſed her dim hand from her robe, her robe which was of the clouds of the deſart: she raiſed her dim hand over Fingal, and turned away her ſilent eyes.

Why weeps the daughter of Starno, ſaid Fingal, with a ſigh? Why is thy face ſo pale, thou daughter of the clouds? — She departed on the wind of Lena; and left him in the midſt of the night.—She mourned the ſons of her people that were to fall by Fingal's hand.

The hero ſtarted from reſt, and ſtill beheld her in his ſoul.—The ſound of Oſcar's ſteps approached. The king ſaw the grey ſhield on his ſide. For the faint beam of the morning came over the waters of Ullin.

What do the foes in their fear? ſaid the riſing king of Morven. Or fly they through ocean's foam, or wait they the battle of ſteel? But why ſhould Fingal ask? I hear their voice on the early wind.—Fly over Lena's heath, O Oſcar, and awake our friends to battle.

The king ſtood by the ſtone of Lubar and thrice raiſed his terrible voice. The deer ſtarted from the fountains of Cromla; and

all the rocks shook on their hills. Like the noiſe of a hundred mountain-ſtreams, that burſt, and roar, and foam: like the clouds that gather to a tempeſt on the blue face of the sky; ſo met the ſons of the deſart, round the terrible voice of Fingal. For pleaſant was the voice of the king of Morven to the warriors of his land: often had he led them to battle, and returned with the ſpoils of the foe.

Come to battle; ſaid the king, ye children of the ſtorm. Come to the death of thouſands. Comhal's ſon will ſee the fight.—My ſword ſhall wave on that hill, and be the ſhield of my people. But never may you need it, warriors; while the ſon of Morni fights, the chief of mighty men.—He ſhall lead my battle; that his fame may riſe in the ſong.—O ye ghoſts of heroes dead! ye riders of the ſtorm of Cromla! receive my falling people with joy, and bring them to your hills.—And may the blaſt of Lena carry them over my ſeas, that they may come to my ſilent dreams, and delight my ſoul in reſt.

Fillan and Oſcar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed ſteel! advance with valour to the fight; and behold the ſon of Morni. Let your ſwords be like his in the ſtrife: and behold the deeds of his hands. Protect the friends of your father:

and remenber the chiefs of old. My children, I shall ſee you yet, though here ye ſhould fall in Erin. Soon ſhall our cold, pale ghoſts meet in a cloud, and fly over the hills of Cona.

Now like a dark and ſtormy cloud, edged round with the red lightning of heaven, and flying weſtward from the morning's beam, the king of hills removed. Terrible is the light of his armour, and two ſpears are in his hand.—His gray hair falls on the wind. —He often looks back on the war. Three bards attend the ſon of fame, to carry his words to the heroes. — High on Cromla's ſide he ſat, waving the lightning of his ſword, and as he waved, we moved.

Joy roſe in Oſcar's face. His cheek is red. His eye ſheds tears. The ſword is a beam of fire in his hand. He came, and ſmiling, ſpoke to Oſſian.— O ruler of the fight of ſteel! my father, hear thy ſon. Retire with Morven's mighty chief; and give me Oſſian's fame. And if here I fall; my king, remember that breaſt of ſnow, that lonely ſun-beam of my love, the white-handed daughter of Toſcar. For with red cheek from the rock, and bending over the ſtream, her ſoft hair flies about her boſom, as ſhe pours the ſigh for Oſcar. Tell her I am on my hills a lightly-bounding ſon of

the wind ; that hereafter , in a cloud , I may meet the lovely maid of Toſcar.

Raiſe , Oſcar , rather raiſe my tomb. I will not yield the fight to thee. For firſt and bloodieſt in the war my arm ſhall teach thee how to fight. But, remember , my ſon, to place this ſword , this bow , and the horn of my deer , within that dark and narrow houſe , whoſe mark is one gray ſtone. Oſcar , I have no love to leave to the care of my ſon ; for graceful Evirallin is no more , the lovely daughter of Branno.

Such were our words , when Gaul's loud voice came growing on the wind. He waved on high the ſword of his father , and rushed to death and wounds.

As waves white-bubbling over the deep come ſwelling, roaring on ; as rocks of ooze meet roaring waves : ſo foes attacked and fought. Man met with man , and ſteel with ſteel. Shields ſound ; men fall. As a hundred hammers on the ſon of the furnace , ſo roſe , o rung their ſwords.

Gaul rushed on like a whirlwind in Ardven. The deſtruction of heroes is on his ſword. Swaran was like the fire of the deſart in the echoing heath of Gormal. How can I give to the ſong the death of many ſpears ? My ſword roſe high , and flamed in

the ſtrife of blood. And, Oſcar, terrible wert thou, my beſt, my greateſt ſon! I rejoiced in my ſecret ſoul, when his ſword flamed over the ſlain. They fled amain through Lena's heath: and we purſued and flew: As ſtones that bound from rock to rock; as axes in echoing woods; as thunder rolls from hill to hill in diſmal broken peals; ſo blow ſucceeded to blow, and death to death, from the hand of Oſcar (1) and mine.

But Swaran cloſed round Morni's ſon, as the ſtrength of the tide of Iniſtore. The king half-roſe from his hill at the fight, and half-aſſumed the ſpear. Go, Ullin, go, my aged bard, begun the king of Morven. Remind the mighty Gaul of battle; remind him of his fathers. Support the yielding fight with ſteps of age, and ſpoke to the king of ſwords.

Son (2) of the chief of generous ſteeds!

(1) Oſſian never fails to give a fine character of his beloved ſon. His ſpeech to his father is that of a hero; it contains the ſubmiſſion due to a parent, and the warmth that becomes a young warrior. There is a propriety in dwelling here on the actions of Oſcar, as the beautiful Malvina, to whom the book is addreſſed, was is love with that hero.

(2) The war-ſong of Ullin varies from the reſt of the poem in the verſification. It runs down like a torrent; and conſiſts almoſt intirely of epithets. The cuſtom of encouraging men in battle with extempore rhymes, has been carried down almoſt to our own times.

high-bounding king of ſpears. Strong arm in every perilous toil. Hard heart that never yields. Chief of the pointed arms of death. Cut down the foe; let no white ſail bound round dark in Iniſtore. Be thine arm like thunder. Thine eyes like fire, thy heart of ſolid rock. Whirl round thy ſword as a meteor at night, and lift thy shield like the flame of death. Son of the chief of generous ſteeds, cut down the foe; deſtroy.—The hero's heart beat high. But Swaran came with battle. He cleft the shield of Gaul in twain; and the ſons of the deſart fled.

Now Fingal aroſe in his might, and thrice he reared his voice. Cromla anſwered around, and the ſons of the deſart ſtood ſtill.—They bent their red faces to earth, ashamed at the preſence of Fingal. He came like a cloud of rain in the days of the ſun, when ſlow it rolls on the hill, and fields expect the shower. Swaran beheld the terrible king of Morven, and ſtopped in the midſt of his courſe. Dark he leaned on his ſpear, rolling his red eyes around. Silent and tall he ſeemed as an oak on the banks of Lubar, which had its branches blaſted of old by the lightning of heaven. It bends over the ſtream, and the gray moſs whiſtles in the wind: ſo

Several of theſe war-ſongs are extant, but the moſt of them are only a group of epithets, without beauty or harmony, utterly deſtitute of poetical merit.

ſtood the king. Then ſlowly he retired to the riſing heath of Lena. His thouſands pour around the hero, and the darkneſs of battle gathers on the hill.

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, ſhone in the midſt of his people. His heroes gather around him, and he ſends forth the voice of his power. Raiſe my ſtandards (1) on high,—ſpread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills. Let them ſound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight. Ye ſons of the roaring ſtreams, that pour from a thouſand hills, be near the king of Morven: attend to the words of his power. Gaul ſtrongeſt arm of death! O Oſcar, of the future fights! Connal, ſon of the blue ſteel of Sora! Dermid, of the dark-brown hair! and Oſſian king of many ſongs, be near your father's arm.

We reared the ſun-beam (1) of battle; the ſtandard of the king. Each hero's ſoul exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew on the

(1) Th' imperial enſign, which full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor ſtreaming to the wind.
MILTON.

(1) Fingal's ſtandard was diſtinguiſhed by the name of *ſun-beam*; probably on account of its bright colour, and its being ſtudded with gold. To begin a battle is expreſſed, in old compoſition, by *lifting of the ſun-beam*.

wind. It was ſtudded with gold above, as the blue wide ſhell of the nightly ſky. Each hero had his ſtandard too; and each his gloomy men.

Behold, ſaid the king of generous ſhells, how Lochlin divides on Lena. — They ſtand like broken clouds on the hill, or an half conſumed grove of oaks; when we ſee the ſky through its branches, and the meteor paſſing behind. Let every chief among the friends of Fingal, take a dark troop of thoſe that frown ſo high; nor let a ſon of the echoing groves bound on the waves of Iniſtore.

Mine, ſaid Gaul, be the ſeven chiefs that came from Lano's lake. — Let Iniſtore's dark king, ſaid Oſcar, come to the ſword of Oſſian's ſon. — To mine the king of Iniſcon, ſaid Connal, heart of ſteel! — Or Mudan's chief or I, ſaid brown-haired Dermid, ſhall ſleep on clay cold earth. — My choice, though now ſo weak and dark, was Terman's battling king; I promiſed with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown ſhield. — Bleſt and victorious be my chiefs, ſaid Fingal of the mildeſt look; Swaran, king of roaring waves, thou art the choice of Fingal.

Now, like an hundred different winds that pour through many vales; divided, dark, the ſons of the hill advanced, and Cromla echoed around.

How can I relate the deaths, when we cloſed in the ſtrife of our ſteel? O daughter of Toſcar! bloody were our hands! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell like the banks of the roaring Cona.—Our arms were victorious on Lena; each chief fulfilled his promiſe. Beſide the murmur of Branno thou didſt often ſit, O maid! when thy white boſom roſe frequent, like the down of the ſwan, when ſlow she ſails the lake, and ſidelong winds are blowing. Thou haſt ſeen the ſun (1) retire red and ſlow behind his cloud; night gathering round on the mountain, while the unfrequent blaſt (2) roared in narrow

(1) *Sol quoque & exoriens & cum ſe condit in undas,*
Signa dabit. Solem certiſſima ſigna ſequuntur,
Ut quæ mane refert, & quæ ſurgentibus aſtris.
Ille ubi naſcentem maculis variaverit ortum
Conditus in nubem, medioque refugerit orbe;
Suſpecti tibi ſint imbres. VIRG.

Above the reſt the ſun, who never lies,
Foretels the change of weather in the skies.
For if he riſe, unwilling to his race,
Clouds on his brow and ſpots upon his face;
Or if thro' miſts he ſhoots his ſullen beams,
Frugal of light, in looſe, and ſtraggling ſtreams,
Suſpect a driſling day. DRYDEN.

(1) *Continuo ventis ſurgentibus aut freta ponti*
Incipiunt agitata tumeſcere; & aridus altis

vales. At length the rain beats hard; and thunder rolls in peals. Lightning glances on the rocks. Spirits ride on beams of fire. And the ſtrength of the mountain-ſtreams (1) comes roaring down the hills. Such was the noiſe of battle, maid of the arms of ſnow. Why, daughter of the hill, that tear? the maids of Lochlin have cauſe to weep. The people of their country fell, for bloody was the blue ſteel of the race of my heroes. But I am ſad, forlorn, and blind; and no more the companion of heroes. Give, lovely maid, to me thy tears, for I have ſeen the tombs of all my friends.

It was then by Fingal's hand a hero fell, to his grief.—Gray-haired he rolled in the duſt, and lifted his faint eyes to the king. And is it by me thou haſt fallen, ſaid the ſon of Comhal, thou friend of Agandecca!

Montibus audiri fragor, aut reſonantia longe
Littora miſceri, & nemorum increbeſcere murmur.
VIRG.

For ere the riſing winds begin to roar,
The working ſeas advance to waſh the ſhore;
Soft whiſpers run along the leafy wood,
And mountains whiſtle to the murm'ring flood.
DRYDEN.

(1)——*Ruunt de montibus amnes.* VIRG.

The rapid rains, deſcending from the hills,
To rolling torrents ſwell the creeping rills.
DRYDEN.

I ſaw thy tears for the maid of my love in the halls of the bloody Starno. Thou haſt been the foe of the foes of my love, and haſt thou fallen by my hand? Raiſe, Ullin, raiſe the grave of the ſon of Mathon; and give his name to the ſong of Agandecca; for dear to my ſoul haſt thou been, thou darkly-dwelling maid of Ardven.

Cuchullin, from the cave of Cromla, heard the noiſe of the troubled war. He called to Connal chief of ſwords, and Carril of other times. The gray-haired heroes heard his voice, and took their aſpen ſpears. They came, and ſaw the tide of battle, like the crowded waves of the ocean; when the dark wind blows from the deep; and rolls the billows through the ſandy vale.

Cuchullin kindled at the fight, and darkneſs gathered on his brow. His hand is on the ſword of his fathers: his red-rolling eyes on the foe. He thrice attempted to rush to battle, and thrice did Connal ſtop him. Chief of the iſle of miſt, he ſaid, Fingal ſubdues the foe. Seek not a part of the fame of the king; himſelf is like a ſtorm.

Then, Carril, go, replied the chief, and greet the king of Morven. When Lochlin falls away like a ſtream after rain, and the noiſe of the battle is over, then be thy voice ſweet in his ear to praiſe the king of

ſwords. Give him the ſword of Caithbat; for Cuchullin is worthy no more to lift the arms of his fathers.

But, O ye ghoſts of the lonely Cromla! ye ſouls of chiefs that are no more! be ye the companions of Cuchullin, and talk to him in the cave of his ſorrow. For never more ſhall I be renowned among the mighty in the land. I am like a beam that has ſhone; like a miſt that fled away, when the blaſt of the morning came, and brightened the ſhaggy ſide of the hill. Connal, talk of arms no more: departed is my fame.—My ſighs ſhall be on Cromla's wind, till my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen.—And thou, white-boſom'd Bragela, mourn over the fall of my fame; for, vanquiſhed, I will never return to thee, thou ſun-beam of Dunſcaich.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT to Book V.

Cuchullin and Connal ſtill remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is deſcribed. Swaran is overcome, bound and delivered over, as a priſoner, to the care of Oſſian and Gaul the ſon of Morni. Fingal, his younger ſons, and Oſcar, ſtill purſue the enemy. The epiſode of Orla a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal, touched with the death of Orla, orders the purſuit to be diſcontinued; and calling his ſons together, he is informed that Ryno the youngeſt of them, was killed. He laments his death, hears the ſtory of Lamdark and Gelchoſſa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Carril, who had been ſent by Cuchullin to congratulate Fingal on his victory, comes in the mean time to Oſſian. The converſation of the two poets cloſes the action of the fourth day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK V. (1)

NOW Connal, on Cromla's windy ſide, ſpoke to the chief of the noble car. Why that gloom, ſon of Semo? Our friends are the mighty in battle. And renowned art thou, O warrior! many were the deaths of

(1) The fourth day ſtill continues. The poet, by putting the narration in the mouth of Connal, who ſtill remained with Cuchullin on the ſide of Cromla, gives propriety to the praiſes of Fingal. The beginning of this book, in the original, is one of the moſt beautiful parts of the poem. The verſification is regular and full, and agrees very well with the ſedate character of Connal.——No poet has adapted the cadence of his verſe more to the temper of the ſpeaker, than Oſſian has done. It is more than probable, that the whole poem was originally deſigned to be ſung to the harp, as the verſification is ſo various, and ſo much ſuited to the different paſſions of the human mind.

thy ſteel. Often has Bragela met with blue-rolling eyes of joy, often has ſhe met her hero, returning in the midſt of the valiant; when his ſword was red with ſlaughter, and his foes ſilent in the fields of the tomb. Pleaſant to her ears were thy bards, when thine actions roſe in the ſong.

But behold the king of Morven; he moves below like a pillar of fire. His ſtrength is like the ſtream of Lubar, or the wind of the echoing Cromla; when the branchy foreſts of night are overturned.

Happy are thy people, O Fingal! thine arm ſhall fight their battles: thou art the firſt in their dangers; the wiſeſt in the days of their peace. Thou ſpeakeſt, and thy thouſands obey; and armies tremble at the ſound of thy ſteel. Happy are thy people, Fingal, chief of the lonely hills.

Who is that ſo dark and terrible, coming in the thunder of his courſe? who is it but Starno's ſon to meet the king of Morven? Behold the battle of the chiefs: it is like the ſtorm of the ocean, when two ſpirits meet far diſtant, and contend for the rolling of the wave. The hunter hears the noiſe on his hill; and ſees the high billows advancing to Ardven's ſhore.

Such were the words of Connal, when the

heroes met in the midſt of their falling people. There was the clang of arms! there every blow, like the hundred hammers of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the kings, and horrid the look of their eyes. Their dark-brown ſhields are cleft in twain; and their ſteel flies, broken, from their helmets. They fling their weapons down. Each rushes (1) to the graſp of his foe. Their ſinewy arms bend round each other: they turn from ſide to ſide, and ſtrain and ſtretch their large ſpreading limbs below. But when the pride of their ſtrength aroſe, they ſhook the hill with their heels; rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed bushes are overturned. At length the ſtrength of Swaran fell; and the king of the groves is bound.

Thus have I ſeen on Cona; (but Cona I behold no more) thus have I ſeen two

(1) This paſſage reſembles one in the twenty-third Iliad.

Cloſe lock'd above their heads and arms are mixt;
Below their planted feet at diſtance fixt;
Now to the graſp each manly body bends;
The humid ſweat from ev'ry pore deſcends;
Their bones reſound with blows; ſides, ſhoulders, thighs,
Swell to each gripe, and bloody tumours riſe.
Pope.

dark hills removed from their place by the ſtrength of the burſting ſtream. They turn from ſide to ſide, and their tall oaks meet one another on high. Then they fall together with all their rocks and trees. The ſtreams are turned by their ſides, and the red ruin is ſeen afar.

Sons of the king of Morven, ſaid the noble Fingal, guard the king of Lochlin; for he is ſtrong, as his thouſand waves. His hand is taught to the battle, and his race of the times of old. Gaul, thou firſt of my heroes, and Oſſian king of ſongs, attend the friend of Agandecca; and raiſe to joy his grief.—But, Oſcar, Fillan, Ryno, ye children of the race! purſue the reſt of Lochlin over the heath of Lena; that no veſſel may hereafter bound on the dark-rolling waves of Iniſtore.

They flew like lightning over the heath. He ſlowly moved as a cloud of thunder, when the ſultry plain of ſummer is ſilent. His ſword is before him as a ſun-beam, terrible as the ſtreaming meteor of night. He came toward a chief of Lochlin, and ſpoke to the ſon of the wave.

Who is that like a cloud at the rock of the roaring ſtream? He cannot bound over its courſe; yet ſtately is the chief! his boſſy ſhield is on his ſide; and his ſpear like the

tree of the deſart. Youth of the dark-brown hair, art thou of Fingal's foes?

I am a ſon of Lochlin, he cries, and ſtrong is my arm in war. My ſpouſe is weeping at home, but Orla (1) will never return.

Or fights or yields the hero, ſaid Fingal of the noble deeds? foes do not conquer in my preſence: but my friends are renowned in the hall. Son of the wave, follow me, partake the feaſt of my ſhells, and purſue the deer of my deſart.

No: ſaid the hero, I aſſiſt the feeble: my ſtrength ſhall remain with the weak in arms. My ſword has been always unmatched, O warrior: let the king of Morven yield.

I never yielded, Orla, Fingal never yielded to man. Draw thy ſword and chuſe thy foe. Many are my heroes.

And does the king refuſe the combat, ſaid Orla of the dark-brown hair? Fingal is a

(1) The ſtory of Orla is ſo beautiful and affecting in the original, that many are in poſſeſſion of it, in the north of Scotland, who never heard a ſyllable more of the poem. It varies the action, and awakes the attention of the reader, when he expected nothing but languor in the conduct of the poem, as the great action was over in the conqueſt of Swaran.

match for Orla: and he alone of all his race. —But, king of Morven, if I ſhall fall, (as one time the warrior muſt die;) raiſe my tomb in the midſt, and let it be the greateſt on Lena. And ſend, over the dark-blue wave, the ſword of Orla to the ſpouſe of his love; that ſhe may ſhew it to her ſon, with tears, to kindle his ſoul to war.

Son of the mournful tale, ſaid Fingal, why doſt thou awaken my tears? One day the warriors muſt die, and the children ſee their uſeleſs arms in the hall. But, Orla, thy tomb ſhall riſe, and thy white-boſomed ſpouſe weep over thy ſword.

They fought on the heath of Lena, but feeble was the arm of Orla. The ſword of Fingal deſcended, and cleft his ſhield in twain. It fell, and glittered on the ground, as the moon on the ſtream of night.

King of Morven, ſaid the hero, lift thy ſword, and pierce my breaſt. Wounded and faint from battle, my friends have left me here. The mournful tale ſhall come to my love on the banks of the ſtreamy Loda; when ſhe is alone in the wood, and the ruſtling blaſt in the leaves.

No; ſaid the king of Morven, I will never wound thee, Orla. On the banks of Loda let her ſee thee eſcaped from the hands of war. Let thy gray-haired father, who, per-

haps, is blind with age, hear the ſound of thy voice in his hall.—With joy let the hero riſe, and ſearch for his ſon with his hands.

But never will he find him, Fingal, ſaid the youth of the ſtreamy Loda.—On Lena's heath I ſhall die; and foreign bards will talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. And now I give it to the wind.

The dark blood poured from his ſide, he fell pale on the heath of Lena. Fingal bends over him as he dies, and calls his younger heroes.

Oſcar and Fillan, my ſons, raiſe high the memory of Orla. Here let the dark-haired hero reſt far from the ſpouſe of his love. Here let him reſt in his narrow houſe far from the ſound of Loda. The ſons of the feeble will find his bow at home, but will not be able to bend it. His faithful dogs howl on his hills, and his boars, which he uſed to purſue, rejoice. Fallen is the arm of battle; the mighty among the valiant is low!

Exalt the voice, and blow the horn, ye ſons of the king of Morven: let us go back to Swaran, and ſend the night away on ſong. Fillan, Oſcar, and Ryno, fly over the heath of Lena. Where, Ryno, art thou, young ſon of fame? Thou art not wont to be the laſt to anſwer thy father.

Ryno, ſaid Ullin firſt of bards, is with the

awful forms of his fathers. With Trathal king of shields, and Trenmor of the mighty deeds. The youth is low, —the youth is pale,—he lies on Lena's heath.

And fell the ſwifteſt in the race, ſaid the king, the firſt to bend the bow? Thou ſcarce haſt been known to me: why did young Ryno fall? But ſleep thou ſoftly on Lena, Fingal ſhall ſoon behold thee. Soon ſhall my voice be heard no more, and my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen. The bards will tell of Fingal's name; the ſtones will talk of me. But, Ryno, thou art low indeed,—thou haſt not received thy fame. Ullin, ſtrike the harp for Ryno; tell what the chief would have been. Farewel, thou firſt in every field. No more ſhall I direct thy dart. Thou that haſt been ſo fair; I behold thee not—Farewel.

The tear is on the cheek of the king; for terrible was his ſon in war. His ſon! that was like a beam of fire by night on the hill; when the foreſts ſink down in its courſe, and the traveller trembles at the ſound.

Whoſe fame is in that dark-green tomb, begun the king of generous ſhells? four ſtones with their heads of moſs ſtand there; and mark the narrow houſe of death. Near it let my Ryno reſt, and be the neighbour of the valiant. Perhaps ſome chief of fame is here to fly with my ſon on clouds. O Ullin,

raiſe the ſongs of other times. Bring to memory the dark dwellers of the tomb. If in the field of the valiant they never fled from danger, my ſon ſhall reſt with them, far from his friends, on the heath of Lena.

Here, ſaid the mouth of the ſong, here reſt the firſt of heroes. Silent is Lamderg (1) in this tomb, and Ullin king of ſwords. And who, ſoft ſmiling from her cloud, ſhews me her face of love? Why, daughter, why ſo pale art thou, firſt of the maids of Cromla? Doſt thou ſleep with the foes in battle, Gelchoſſa, white-boſomed daughter of Tuathal?—Thou haſt been the love of thouſands, but Lamderg was thy love. He came to Selma's moſſy towers, and, ſtriking his dark buckler, ſpoke:

Where is Gelchoſſa, my love, the daughter of the noble Tuathal? I left her in the hall of Selma, when I fought with the gloomy Ulfadda. Return ſoon, O Lamderg, ſhe ſaid, for here I am in the midſt of ſorrow. Her white breaſt roſe with ſighs. Her cheek was wet with tears. But I ſee her not coming to meet me; and to ſooth my ſoul after battle. Silent is the hall of my joy; I hear not the voice of the bard.

(1) Lamh-dhearg ſignifies *bloody hand*. Gelchoſſa, *white-legged*. Tuathal, *ſurly*. Ulfadda, *long-beard*. Ferchios, *the conqueror of men*.

—Bran (1) does not shake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of Lamderg. Where is Gelchoſſa, my love, the mild daughter of the generous Tuathal?

Lamderg! ſays Ferchios the ſon of Aidon, Gelchoſſa may be on Cromla; ſhe and the maids of the bow purſuing the flying deer.

Ferchios? replied the chief of Cromla, no noiſe meets the ear of Lamderg. No ſound is in the woods of Lena. No deer fly in my ſight. No panting dog purſues. I ſee not Gelchoſſa my love, fair as the full moon ſetting on the hills of Cromla. Go, Ferchios, go to Allad (2) the gray-haired ſon of the rock. His dwelling is in the circle of ſtones. He may know of Gelchoſſa.

The ſon of Aidon went; and ſpoke to the ear of age. Allad! thou that dwelleſt in the

(1) Bran is a common name of gray-hounds to this day. It is a cuſtom, in the north of Scotland, to give the names of the heroes mentioned in this poem, to their dogs; a proof that they are familiar to the ear, and their fame generally known.

(2) Allad is plainly a druid: he is called the ſon of the rock, from his dwelling in a cave; and the circle of ſtones here mentioned is the pale of the druidical temple. He is here conſulted, as one who had a ſupernatural knowledge of things; from the druids, no doubt, came the ridiculous notion of the ſecond ſight, which prevailed in the highlands and iſles.

rock, thou that trembleſt alone, what ſaw thine eyes of age?

I ſaw, anſwered Allad the old, Ullin the ſon of Cairbar. He came like a cloud from Cromla; and he hummed a ſurly ſong like a blaſt in a leafleſs wood. He entered the hall of Selma.—Lamderg, he ſaid, moſt dreadful of men, fight or yield to Ullin. Lamderg, replied Gelchoſſa, the ſon of battle, is not here. He fights Ulfadda mighty chief. He is not here, thou firſt of men. But Lamderg never yielded. He will fight the ſon of Cairbar.

Lovely art thou, ſaid terrible Ullin, daughter of the generous Tuathal. I carry thee to Cairbar's halls. The valiant ſhall have Gelchoſſa. Three days I remain on Cromla, to wait that ſon of battle, Lamderg. On the fourth Gelchoſſa is mine, if the mighty Lamderg flies.

Allad! ſaid the chief of Cromla, peace to thy dreams in the cave. Ferchios, ſound the horn of Lamderg, that Ullin may hear on Cromla. Lamderg (1), like a roaring ſtorm, aſcended the hill from Selma. He hummed

(1) The reader will find this paſſage altered from what it was in the fragments of ancient poetry. —— It is delivered down very differently by tradition, and the tranſlator has choſen that reading which favours leaſt of bombaſt.

a ſurly ſong as he went, like the noiſe of a falling ſtream. He ſtood like a cloud on the hill, that varies its form to the wind. He rolled a ſtone, the ſign of war. Ullin heard in Cairbar's hall. The hero heard, with joy, his foe, and took his father's ſpear. A ſmile brightens his dark-brown cheek, as he places his ſword by his ſide. The dagger glittered in his hand. He whiſtled as he went.

Gelchoſſa ſaw the ſilent chief, as a wreath of miſt aſcending the hill.—She ſtruck her white and heaving breaſt; and ſilent, tearful, feared for Lamderg.

Cairbar, hoary chief of shells, ſaid the maid of the tender hand, I muſt bend the bow on Cromla; for I ſee the dark-brown hinds.

She haſted up the hill. In vain! the gloomy heroes fought.—Why should I tell the king of Morven how wrathful heroes fight!—Fierce Ullin fell. Young Lamderg came all pale to the daughter of generous Tuathal.

What blood, my love, the ſoft-haired woman ſaid, what blood runs down my warrior's ſide?—It is Ullin's blood, the chief replied, thou fairer than the ſnow of Cromla! Gelchoſſa, let me reſt here a little while. The mighty Lamderg died.

And ſleepeſt thou ſo ſoon on earth, O

chief of shady Cromla? three days she mourned beſide her love. — The hunters found her dead. They raiſed this tomb above the three. Thy ſon, O king of Morven, may reſt here with heroes.

And here my ſon shall reſt, ſaid Fingal, the noiſe of their fame has reached my ears. Fillan and Fergus! bring hither Orla; the pale youth of the ſtream of Loda. Not unequalled shall Ryno lie in earth, when Orla is by his ſide. Weep, ye daughters of Morven, and ye maids of the ſtreamy Loda. Like a tree they grew on the hills; and they have fallen like the oak (1) of the deſart; when it lies acroſs a ſtream, and withers in the wind of the mountain.

Oſcar! chief of every youth! thou ſeeſt how they have fallen. Be thou, like them, on earth renowned. Like them the ſong of bards. Terrible were their forms in battle; but calm was Ryno in the days of peace. He was like the bow of the ſhower ſeen far diſtant on the ſtream; when the ſun is ſetting on Mora, and ſilence on the hill of deer. Reſt, youngeſt of my ſons, reſt, O Ryno, on Lena.

(1) ——ὡς ὅτε τις δρῦς ἔρριζεν—— Hom. Il. 16.

——as the mountain oak
Nods to the ax, till, with a groaning ſound,
It ſinks, and ſpreads its honours on the ground.
Pope.

We too shall be no more; for the warrior one day muſt fall.

Such was thy grief, thou king of hills, when Ryno lay on earth. What muſt the grief of Oſſian be, for thou thyself art gone. I hear not thy diſtant voice on Cona. My eyes perceive thee not. Often forlorn and dark I ſit at thy tomb; and feel it with my hands. When I think I hear thy voice; it is but the blaſt of the deſart.—Fingal has long ſince fallen aſleep, the ruler of the war.

Then Gaul and Oſſian ſat with Swaran on the ſoft green banks of Lubar. I touched the harp to pleaſe the king. But gloomy was his brow. He rolled his red eyes towards Lena. The hero mourned his people.

I lifted my eyes to Cromla, and I ſaw the ſon of generous Semo.—Sad and ſlow he retired from his hill towards the lonely cave of Tura. He ſaw Fingal victorious, and mixed his joy with grief. The ſun is bright on his armour, and Connal ſlowly followed. They ſunk behind the hill, like two pillars of the fire of night; when winds purſue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath reſounds. Beſide a ſtream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock. One tree bends above it; and the rushing winds echo againſt its ſides. Here reſts the chief of Dunſcaich, the ſon of generous Semo. His thoughts are on the battle he loſt; and the

tear is on his cheek. He mourned the departure of his fame that fled like the miſt of Cona. O Bragela, thou art too far remote to cheer the ſoul of the hero. But let him ſee thy bright form in his ſoul; that his thoughts may return to the lonely ſun-beam of Dunſcaich.

Who comes with the locks of age? It is the ſon of ſong. Hail, Carril of other times, thy voice is like the harp in the halls of Tura. Thy words are pleaſant as the ſhower that falls on the fields of the ſun. Carril of the times of old, why comeſt thou from the ſon of the generous Semo?

Oſſian king of ſwords, replied the bard, thou beſt raiſeſt the ſong. Long haſt thou been known to Carril, thou ruler of battles. Often have I touched the harp to lovely Evirallin. Thou too haſt often accompanied my voice in Branno's hall of generous ſhells. And often, amidſt our voices, was heard the mildeſt Evirallin. One day ſhe ſung of Cormac's fall, the youth that died for her love. I ſaw the tears on her cheek, and on thine, thou chief of men. Her ſoul was touched for the unhappy, though ſhe loved him not. How fair among a thouſand maids was the daughter of the generous Branno!

Bring not, Carril, I replied, bring not her memory to my mind. My ſoul muſt melt at

the remembrance. My eyes muſt have their tears. Pale in the earth is she, the ſoftly-blushing fair of my love. But ſit thou on the heath, O Bard, and let us hear thy voice. It is pleaſant as the gale of ſpring that ſighs on the hunter's ear; when he wakens from dreams of joy, and has heard the muſic of the ſpirits of the hill.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM,

BOOK VI.

ARGUMENT to Book VI.

Night comes on. Fingal gives a feaſt to his army, at which Swaran is preſent. The king commands Ullin his bard to give the ſong of peace; a cuſtom always obſerved at the end of a war. Ullin relates the actions of Trenmor, great grand-father to Fingal, in Scandinavia, and his marriage with Inibaca, the daughter of a king of Lochlin who was anceſtor to Swaran; which conſideration, together with his being brother to Agandecca, with whom Fingal was in love in his youth, induced the king to releaſe him, and permit him to return, with the remains of his army, into Lochlin, upon his promiſe of never returning to Ireland, in a hoſtile manner. The night is ſpent in ſettling Swaran's departure, in ſongs of bards, and in a converſation in which the ſtory of Grumal is introduced by Fingal. Morning comes. Swaran departs; Fingal goes on a hunting party, and finding Cuchullin in the cave of Tura, conforts him, and ſets ſail, the next day, for Scotland; which concludes the poem.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK VI. (1)

THE clouds of night come rolling down and reſt on Cromla's dark-brown ſteep. The ſtars of the north ariſe over the rolling of the waves of Ullin; they ſhew their heads of fire through the flying miſt of heaven. A diſtant wind roars in the wood; but ſilent and dark is the plain of death.

Still on the darkening Lena aroſe in my ears the tuneful voice of Carril. He ſung of the companions of our youth, and the days of former years; when we met on the banks of Lego, and ſent round the joy of the ſhell. Cromla, with its cloudy ſteeps, anſwered to

(1) This book opens with the fourth night, and ends on the morning of the ſixth day. The time of five days, five nights, and a part of the ſixth day, is taken up in the poem. The ſcene lies in the heath of Lena, and the mountain Cromla, on the coaſt of Ulſter.

his voice. The ghoſts of thoſe he ſung came in their ruſtling blaſt. They were ſeen to bend with joy towards the ſound of their praiſe.

Be thy ſoul bleſt, O Carril, in the midſt of thy eddying winds. O that thou would come to my hall, when I am alone by night!—And thou doſt come, my friend, I hear often thy light hand on my harp; when it hangs on the diſtant wall, and the feeble ſound touches my ear. Why doſt thou not ſpeak to me in my grief, and tell when I ſhall behold my friends? But thou paſſeſt away in thy murmuring blaſt; and thy wind whiſtles through the gray hair of Oſſian.

Now on the ſide of Mora the heroes gathered to the feaſt. A thouſand aged oaks are burning to the wind. — The ſtrength (1) of the ſhells goes round. And the ſouls of warriors brighten with joy. But the king of Lochlin is

(1) By the ſtrength of the ſhell, is meant the liquor the heroes drunk: of what kind it was, cannot be aſcertained at this diſtance of time. The tranſlator has met with ſeveral ancient poems, that mention wax-lights and wine, as common in the halls of Fingal. The names of both are borrowed from the Latin, which plainly ſhews that our anceſtors had them from the Romans, if they had them at all. The Caledonians in their frequent incurſions to the province, might become acquainted with thoſe conveniencies of life, and introduce them into their own country, among the booty which they carried from South Britain.

ſilent, and ſorrow reddens in the eyes of his pride. He often turned toward Lena and remembered that he fell.

Fingal leaned on the ſhield of his fathers. His gray locks ſlowly waved on the wind, and glittered to the beam of night. He ſaw the grief of Swaran, and ſpoke to the firſt of Bards.

Raiſe, Ullin, raiſe the ſong of peace, and ſooth my ſoul after battle, that my ear may forget the noiſe of arms. And let a hundred harps be near to gladden the king of Lochlin. He muſt depart from us with joy.—None ever went ſad from Fingal. Oſcar! the lightning of my ſword is againſt the ſtrong in battle; but peaceful it lies by my ſide, when warriors yield in war.

Trenmor (1), ſaid the mouth of the ſongs, lived in the days of other years. He bounded over the waves of the north, companion of the ſtorm. The high rocks of the land of Lochlin, and its groves of murmuring ſounds appeared to the hero through the miſt;—he bound his white-boſomed ſails.—Trenmor purſued the boar that roared along the woods of Gormal. Many had fled from its preſence; but the ſpear of Trenmor ſlew it.

(1) Trenmor was great grandfather to Fingal. The ſtory is introduced to facilitate the diſmiſſion of Swaran.

Three chiefs, that beheld the deed, told of the mighty ſtranger. They told that he ſtood like a pillar of fire in the bright arms of his valour. The king of Lochlin prepared the feaſt, and called the blooming Trenmor. Three days he feaſted at Gormal's windy towers; and got his choice in the combat.

The land of Lochlin had no hero that yielded not to Trenmor. The ſhell of joy went round with ſongs in praiſe of the king of Morven; he that came over the waves, the firſt of mighty men.

Now, when the fourth gray morn aroſe, the hero launched his ſhip; and, walking along the ſilent ſhore, waited for the ruſhing wind. For loud and diſtant he heard the blaſt murmuring in the grove.

Covered over with arms of ſteel, a ſon of the woody Gormal appeared. Red was his cheek and fair his hair. His ſkin like the ſnow of Morven. Mild rolled his blue and ſmiling eye, when he ſpoke to the king of ſwords.

Stay, Trenmor, ſtay thou firſt of men, thou haſt not conquered Lonval's ſon. My ſword has often met the brave. And the wiſe ſhun the ſtrength of my bow.

Thou fair-haired youth, Trenmor replied, I will not fight with Lonval's ſon. Thine arm

is feeble, ſun-beam of beauty. Retire to Gormal's dark-brown hinds.

But I will retire replied the youth, with the ſword of Trenmor; and exult in the ſound of my fame. The virgins ſhall gather with ſmiles around him who conquered Trenmor. They ſhall ſigh with the ſighs of love, and admire the length of thy ſpear; when I ſhall carry it among thouſands, and lift the glittering point to the ſun.

Thou ſhalt never carry my ſpear, ſaid the angry king of Morven. — Thy mother ſhall find thee pale on the ſhore of the echoing Gormal; and, looking over the dark-blue deep, ſee the ſails of him that ſlew her ſon.

I will not lift the ſpear, replied the youth, my arm is not ſtrong with years. But with the feathered dart I have learned to pierce a diſtant foe. Throw down that heavy mail of ſteel; for Trenmor is covered all over. — I firſt will lay my mail on earth. — Throw now thy dart, thou king of Morven.

He ſaw the heaving of her breaſt. It was the ſiſter of the king. — She had ſeen him in the halls of Gormal; and loved his face of youth. — The ſpear dropt from the hand of Trenmor; he bent his red cheek to the ground; for he had ſeen her like a beam of light, that meets the ſons of the cave, when they reviſit

the fields of the ſun, and bend their aching eyes.

Chief of the windy Morven, begun the maid of the arms of ſnow, let me reſt in thy bounding ſhip, far from the love of Corlo. For he, like thunder of the deſart, is terrible to Inibaca. He loves me in the gloom of his pride, and ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears.

Reſt thou in peace, ſaid the mighty Trenmor, behind the ſhield of my fathers. I will not fly from the chief, though he ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears.

Three days he waited on the ſhore; and ſent his horn abroad. He called Corlo to battle from all his echoing hills. But Corlo came not to battle. The king of Lochlin deſcended. He feaſted on roaring ſhore, and gave the maid to Trenmor.

King of Lochlin, ſaid Fingal, thy blood flows in the veins of thy foe. Our families met in battle, becauſe they loved the ſtrife of ſpears. But often did they feaſt in the hall; and ſend round the joy of the ſhell.—Let thy face brighten with gladneſs, and thine ear delight in the bard. Dreadful as the ſtorm of thine ocean, thou haſt poured thy valour forth; thy voice has been like the voice of thouſands, when they engage in battle. Raiſe, to morrow, thy white ſails to the wind, thou brother of Agandecca.

Bright

Bright as the beam of noon, she comes on my mournful ſoul. I ſaw thy tears for the fair one, and ſpared thee in the halls of Starno; when my ſword was red with ſlaughter, and my eye full of tears for the maid.—Or doſt thou chuſe the fight? The combat which thy fathers gave to Trenmor is thine: that thou mayeſt depart renowned, like the ſun ſetting in the weſt.

King of the race of Morven, ſaid the chief of the waves of Lochlin, never will Swaran fight with thee, firſt of a thouſand heroes. I ſaw thee in the halls of Starno, and few were thy years beyond my own.—When ſhall I, ſaid I to my ſoul, lift the ſpear like the noble Fingal? We have fought heretofore, O warrior, on the ſide of the ſhaggy Malmor; after my waves had carried me to thy halls, and the feaſt of a thouſand ſhells was ſpread. Let the bards ſend him who overcame to future years, for noble was the ſtrife of heathy Malmor.

But many of the ſhips of Lochlin have loſt their youths on Lena. Take theſe, thou king of Morven, and be the friend of Swaran. And when thy ſons ſhall come to the moſſy towers of Gormal, the feaſt of ſhells ſhall be ſpread, and the combat offered on the vale.

Nor ſhip, replied the king, ſhall Fingal take, nor land of many hills. The deſart is

enough to me with all its deer and woods. Riſe on thy waves again, thou noble friend of Agandecca. Spread thy white ſails to the beam of the morning, and return to the echoing hills of Gormal.

Bleſt be thy ſoul, thou king of ſhells, ſaid Swaran of the dark-brown ſhield. In peace, thou art the gale of ſpring, in war, the mountain-ſtorm. Take now my hand in friendſhip, thou noble king of Morven. Let thy bards mourn thoſe who fell. Let Erin give the ſons of Lochlin to earth; and raiſe the moſſy ſtones of their fame. That the children of the north hereafter may behold the place where their fathers fought; and ſome hunter may ſay, when he leans on a moſſy tomb, here Fingal and Swaran fought, the heroes of other years. Thus hereafter ſhall he ſay, and our fame ſhall laſt for ever.

Swaran, ſaid the king of the hills, to-day our fame is greateſt. We ſhall paſs away like a dream. No ſound will be in the fields of our battles. Our tombs will be loſt in the heath. The hunter ſhall not know the place of our reſt. Our names may be heard in ſong, but the ſtrength of our arms will ceaſe. O Oſſian, Carril, and Ullin, you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the ſong of other years. Let the night paſs away on the ſound, and morning return with joy.

We gave the ſong to the kings, and a hundred harps accompanied our voice. The face of Swaran brightened like the full moon of heaven, when the clouds vaniſh away, and leave her calm and broad in the midſt of the ſky.

It was then that Fingal ſpoke to Carril, the chief of other times. Where is the ſon of Semo, the king of the iſle of miſt? has he retired, like the meteor of death, to the dreary cave of Tura?

Cuchullin, ſaid Carril of other times, lies in the dreary cave of Tura. His hand is on the ſword of his ſtrength, his thoughts on the battle which he loſt. Mournful is the king of ſpears; for he has often been victorious. He ſends the ſword of his war to reſt on the ſide of Fingal. For, like the ſtorm of the deſart, thou haſt ſcattered all his foes. Take, O Fingal, the ſword of the hero; for his fame is departed like miſt, when it flies before the ruſtling wind of the vale.

No: replied the king, Fingal ſhall never take his ſword. His arm is mighty in war; and tell him his fame ſhall never fail. Many have been overcome in battle, that have ſhone afterwards like the ſun of heaven.

O Swaran, king of the reſounding woods

give all thy grief away.—The vanquished, if brave, are renowned. They are like the ſun in a cloud, when he hides his face in the ſouth, but looks again on the hills of graſs.

Grumal was a chief of Cona. He ſought the battle on every coaſt. His ſoul rejoiced in blood, his ear in the din of arms. He poured his warriors on the ſounding Craca; and Craca's king met him from his grove; for then, within the circle of Brumo (1), he ſpoke to the ſtone of power.

Fierce was the battle of the heroes, for the maid of the breaſt of ſnow. The fame of the daughter of Craca had reached Grumal at the ſtreams of Cona; he vowed to have the white-boſomed maid, or die on the echoing Craca. Three days they ſtrove together, and Grumal, on the fourth, was bound.

Far from his friends, they placed him in the horrid circle of Brumo; where often, they ſaid, the ghoſts of the dead howled round the ſtone of their fear. But afterwards he shone like a pillar of the light of heaven. They fell by his mighty hand, and Grumal had his fame.

(1) This paſſage alludes to the religion of the king of Craca. See a note on a ſimilar ſubject, in the third book.

Raiſe, ye bards of other times, raiſe high the praiſe of heroes; that my ſoul may ſettle on their fame; and the mind of Swaran ceaſe to be ſad.

They lay in the heath of Mora; the dark winds ruſtled over the heroes.—A hundred voices at once aroſe, a hundred harps were ſtrung; they ſung of other times, and the mighty chiefs of former years.

When now ſhall I hear the bard; or rejoice at the fame of my fathers? The harp is not ſtrung on Morven; nor the voice of muſic raiſed on Cona. Dead with the mighty is the bard; and fame is in the deſart no more.

Morning trembles with the beam of the eaſt, and glimmers on gray-headed Cromla. Over Lena is heard the horn of Swaran, and the ſons of the ocean gather around.—Silent and ſad, they mount the wave, and the blaſt of Ullin is behind their ſails. White, as the miſt of Morven, they float along the ſea.

Call, ſaid Fingal, call my dogs, the long-bounding ſons of the chace. Call white-breaſted Bran; and the ſurly ſtrength of Luath.—Fillan, and Ryno—but he is not here; my ſon reſts on the bed of death. Fillan and Fergus, blow my horn, that the joy of the chace may ariſe; that the deer of Cromla may hear, and ſtart at the lake of roes.

The shrill ſound ſpreads along the wood. The ſons of heathy Cromla ariſe.—A thouſand dogs fly off at once, gray-bounding through the heath. A deer fell by every dog, and three by the white-breaſted Bran. He brought them, in their flight, to Fingal, that the joy of the king might be great.

One deer fell at the tomb of Ryno; and the grief of Fingal returned. He ſaw how peaceful lay the ſtone of him who was the firſt at the chace.—No more ſhalt thou riſe, O my ſon, to partake of the feaſt of Cromla. Soon will thy tomb be hid, and the graſs grow rank on thy grave. The ſons of the feeble ſhall paſs over it, and ſhall not know that the mighty lies there.

Oſſian and Fillan, ſons of my ſtrength, and Gaul king of the blue ſwords of war, let us aſcend the hill, to the cave of Tura, and find the chief of the battles of Erin.—Are theſe the walls of Tura? gray and lonely they riſe on the heath. The king of ſhells is ſad, and the halls are deſolate. Come, let us find the king of ſwords, and give him all our joy.—But is that Cuchullin, O Fillan, or a pillar of ſmoke on the heath? The wind of Cromla is on my eyes, and I diſtinguish not my friend.

'Fingal, replied the youth, it is the ſon of Semo. Gloomy and ſad is the hero; his hand

is on his ſword. Hail to the ſon of battle, breaker of the ſhields!

Hail to thee; replied Cuchullin, hail to all the ſons of Morven. Delightful is thy preſence, O Fingal. It is like the ſun on Cromla; when the hunter mourns his abſence for a ſeaſon, and ſees him between the clouds. Thy ſons are like ſtars that attend thy courſe, and give light in the night. It is not thus thou haſt ſeen me, O Fingal, returning from the wars of the deſart; when the kings of the world (1) had fled, and joy returned to the hill of hinds.

Many are thy words, Cuchullin, ſaid Connan (2) of ſmall renown. Thy words are many, ſon of Semo, but where are thy deeds in arms? Why did we come over the ocean to aid thy feeble ſword? Thou flyeſt to thy cave of ſorrow, and Connan fights thy battles. Reſign to me theſe arms of light; yield them, thou ſon of Erin.

(1) This is the only paſſage in the poem, wherein the wars of Fingal againſt the Romans are alluded to. —— The Roman emperor is diſtinguiſhed in old compoſitions by the title of *king of the world*.

(2) Connan was of the family of Morny. He is mentioned in ſeveral other poems, and always appears with the ſame character. The poet paſſed him over in ſilence till now, and his behaviour here deſerves no better uſage.

No hero, replied the chief, ever ſought the arms of Cuchullin; and had a thouſand heroes ſought them, it were in vain, thou gloomy youth. I fled not to the cave of ſorrow, as long as Erin's warriors lived.

Youth of the feeble arm, ſaid Fingal, Connan, ſay no more. Cuchullin is renowned in battle, and terrible over the deſart. Often have I heard thy fame, thou ſtormy chief of Innisfail. Spread now thy white ſails for the iſle of miſt, and ſee Bragela leaning on her rock. Her tender eye is in tears, and the winds lift her long hair from her heaving breaſt. She liſtens to the winds of night, to hear the voice of thy rowers (1); to hear the ſong of the ſea, and the ſound of thy diſtant harp.

And long ſhall ſhe liſten in vain; Cuchullin ſhall never return. How can I behold Bragela to raiſe the ſigh of her breaſt? Fingal, I was always victorious in the battles of other ſpears.

And hereafter thou ſhalt be victorious, ſaid Fingal king of ſhells. The fame of Cuchullin ſhall grow like the branchy tree of Cromla. Many battles await thee, O chief,

(1) The practice of ſinging, when they row, is univerſal among the inhabitants of the north-weſt coaſt of Scotland and the iſles. It deceives time, and inſpirits the rowers.

and many shall be the wounds of thy hand. Bring hither, Oſcar, the deer, and prepare the feaſt of shells; that our ſouls may rejoice after danger, and our friends delight in our preſence.

We ſat, we feaſted, and we ſung. The ſoul of Cuchullin roſe. The ſtrength of his arm returned; and gladneſs brightened on his face. Ullin gave the ſong, and Carril raiſed the voice. I, often, joined the bards, and ſung of battles of the ſpear.—Battles! where I often fought; but now I fight no more. The fame of my former actions is ceaſed, and I ſit forlorn at the tombs of my friends.

Thus they paſſed the night in the ſong; and brought back the morning with joy. Fingal aroſe on the heath, and ſhook his glittering ſpear in his hand.—He moved firſt toward the plains of Lena, and we followed like a ridge of fire. Spread the ſail, ſaid the king of Morven, and catch the winds that pour from Lena.—We roſe on the wave with ſongs, and rushed, with joy, through the foam of the ocean (1).

(1) It is allowed by the beſt critics that an epic poem ought to end happily. This rule, in its moſt material circumſtances, is obſerved by the three moſt deſervedly celebrated poets, Homer, Virgil, and Milton; yet, I know not how it happens, the concluſions of their poems throw a melancholy damp on the mind. One leaves his reader at a funeral; another at the un-

timely death of a hero; and the third in the ſolitary ſcenes of an unpeopled world.

Ως οἳ γ' ἀμφίπυρον τάφον Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο.

HOMER.

Such honours Ilion to her hero paid,
And peaceful ſlept the mighty Hector's ſhade.

POPE.

——*Ferrum adverſo ſub pectore condit*
Fervidus. Aſt illi ſolvuntur frigore membra,
Vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata ſub umbras.

VIRGIL.

He rais'd his arm aloft; and, at the word,
Deep in his boſom drove the ſhining ſword.
The ſtreaming blood diſtain'd his arms around,
And the diſdainful ſoul came rushing thro' the wound.

DRYDEN.

They, hand in hand, with wand'ring ſteps, and ſlow,
Through Eden took their ſolitary way.

MILTON.

COMALA:

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

COMALA:

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

COMALA:

A

DRAMATIC POEM. (1)

The PERSONS.

FINGAL.	MELILCOMA,	daughters of Morni.
HIDALLAN.	DERSAGRENA,	
COMALA.	BARDS.	

DERSAGRENA.

THE chace is over.—No noiſe on Ardven, but the torrent's roar!—Daughter of Morni,

(1) This poem is valuable on account of the light it throws on the antiquity of Oſſian's compoſitions. The Caracul mentioned here is the ſame with Caracalla, the ſon of Severus, who in the year 211 commanded an expedition againſt the Caledonians.—— The variety of the meaſure ſhews that the poem was originally ſet to muſic, and perhaps preſented be-

come from Crona's banks. Lay down the bow, and take the harp. Let the night come on with ſongs, and our joy be great on Ardven.

Melilcoma (1).

And night comes on, thou blue-eyed maid, gray night grows dim along the plain. I ſaw a deer at Crona's ſtream; a moſſy bank he ſeemed through the gloom, but ſoon he bounded away. A meteor played round his

fore the chiefs upon ſolemn occaſions.——Tradition has handed down the ſtory more complete, than it is in the poem.—— Comala, the daughter of Sarno king of Iniſtore or Orkney iſlands, fell in love with Fingal the ſon of Comhal at a feaſt, to which her father had invited him, [Fingal, B. III.] upon his return from Lochlin, after the death of Agandecca. Her paſſion was ſo violent, that ſhe followed him, diſguiſed like a youth, who wanted to be employed in his wars. She was ſoon diſcovered by Hidallan the ſon of Lamor, one of Fingal's heroes, whoſe love ſhe had ſlighted ſome time before.——Her romantic paſſion and beauty recommended her ſo much to the king, that he had reſolved to make her his wife; when news was brought him of Caracul's expedition. He marched to ſtop the progreſs of the enemy, and Comala attended him.——He left her on a hill, within ſight of Caracul's army, when he himſelf went to battle, having previouſly promiſed, if he ſurvived, to return that night. The ſequel of the ſtory may be gathered from the poem itſelf.

(1) Melilcoma, *ſoft-rolling eye.*

branchy horns; and the awful faces (1) of other times looked from the clouds of Crona.

DERSAGRENA (2).

Theſe are the ſigns of Fingal's death.—The king of ſhields is fallen!—and Caracul prevails. Riſe, Comala (3), from thy rocks; daughter of Sarno, riſe in tears. The youth of thy love is low, and his ghoſt is already on our hills.

MELILCOMA.

There Comala ſits forlorn. Two gray dogs near ſhake their rough ears, and catch the flying breeze. Her red cheek reſts on her arm, and the mountain-wind is in her hair. She turns her blue-rolling eyes towards the fields of his promiſe.—Where art thou, O Fingal, for the night is gathering around?

(1) *Apparent diræ facies, inimicaque Trojæ*
Numina magna Deûm. VIRG.

——dreadful ſounds I hear,
And the dire forms of hoſtile gods appear.
DRYDEN.

(2) Derſagrena, *the brightneſs of a ſun-beam.*

(3) Comala, *the maid of the pleaſant brow.*

COMALA.

O Carun (1) of the ſtreams! why do I behold thy waters rolling in blood? Has the noiſe of the battle been heard on thy banks; and ſleeps the king of Morven? — Riſe, moon, thou daughter of the ſky! look from between thy clouds, that I may behold the light of his ſteel, on the field of his promiſe.—Or rather let the meteor, that lights our departed fathers through the night, come, with its red light, to ſhew me the way to my fallen hero. Who will defend me from ſorrow? Who from the love of Hidallan? Long ſhall Comala look, before ſhe can behold Fingal in the midſt of his hoſt, bright as the beam of the morning in the cloud of an early ſhower.

(1) Carun or Cara'on, *a winding river.*—— This river retains ſtill the name of Carron, and falls into the Forth, ſome miles to the North of Falkirk.

——Genteſque alias cum velleret armis
Sedibus, aut victas vilem ſervaret in uſum
Servitii, hic contenta ſuos defendere fines
Roma ſecurigeris prætendit mœnia Scotis:
Hic ſpe progreſſus poſita, Caronis ad undam
Terminus Auſonii ſignat divortia regni.

BUCHANAN.

HIDALLAN (1).

Roll, thou miſt of gloomy Crona, roll on the path of the hunter. Hide his ſteps from mine eyes, and let me remember my friend no more. The bands of battle are ſcattered, and no crowding ſteps are round the noiſe of his ſteel. O Carun, roll thy ſtreams of blood, for the chief of the people fell.

COMALA.

Who fell on Carun's graſſy banks, ſon of the cloudy night? Was he white as the ſnow of Ardven, blooming as the bow of the ſhower? Was his hair like the miſt of the hill, ſoft and curling in the day of the ſun? Was he like the thunder of heaven in battle; fleet as the roe of the deſart?

HIDALLAN.

O that I might behold his love, fair-leaning from her rock! Her red eye dim

(1) Hidallan was ſent by Fingal, to give notice to Comala of his return. He to revenge himſelf on her, for ſlighting his love ſome time before, told her, that the king was killed in battle. He even pretended that he carried his body from the field, to be buried in her preſence; and this circumſtance makes it probable, that the poem was preſented of old.

in tears, and her blushing cheek half hid in her locks! Blow, thou gentle breeze, and lift the heavy locks of the maid, that I may behold her white arm, and the lovely cheek of her ſorrow!

COMALA.

And is the ſon of Comhal fallen, chief of the mournful tale? The thunder rolls on the hill! — The lightning flies on wings of fire! But they frighten not Comala; for her Fingal fell. Say, chief of the mournful tale, fell the breaker of shields?

HIDALLAN.

The nations are ſcattered on their hills; for they ſhall hear the voice of the chief no more.

COMALA.

Confuſion purſue thee over thy plains; and deſtruction overtake thee, thou king of the world. Few be thy ſteps to thy grave; and let one virgin mourn thee. Let her be, like Comala, tearful in the days of her youth. —Why haſt thou told me, Hidallan, that my hero fell? I might have hoped a little while his return, and have thought I ſaw him on the diſtant rock. A tree might have deceived me with his appearance; and the

wind of the hill been the ſound of his horn in mine ear. O that I were on the banks of Carun! that my tears might be warm on his cheek!

HIDALLAN.

He lies not on the banks of Carun: on Ardven heroes raiſe his tomb. Look on them, O moon, from thy clouds! Be thy beam bright on his breaſt, that Comala may behold him in the light of his armour.

COMALA.

Stop, ye ſons of the grave, till I behold my love. He left me at the chace, alone. I knew not that he went to war. He ſaid he would return with the night; and the king of Morven is returned. Why didſt thou not tell me that he would fall, O trembling ſon of the rock (1)! Thou haſt ſeen him in the blood of his youth, but thou didſt not tell Comala.

MELILCOMA.

What ſound is that on Ardven? Who is

(1) By *the ſon of the rock* she means a druid. It is probable that ſome of the order of the druids remained as late as the beginning of the reign of Fingal; and that Comala had conſulted one of them, concerning the event of the war with Caracul.

that bright in the vale? Who comes like the ſtrength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon?

COMALA.

Who is it, but the foe of Comala, the ſon of the king of the world? Ghoſt of Fingal! do thou, from thy cloud, direct Comala's bow. Let him fall, like the hart of the deſart.—It is Fingal in the crowd of his ghoſts.—Why doſt thou come, my love, to frighten, and pleaſe my ſoul?

FINGAL.

Raiſe, ye bards of the ſong, the wars of the ſtreamy Carun. Caracul has fled from my arms along the fields of his pride. He ſets far diſtant, like a meteor that incloſes a ſpirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around.

I heard a voice like the breeze of my hills. Is it the huntreſs of Galmal, the white-handed daughter of Sarno? Look from thy rocks (1), my love; and let me hear the voice of Comala.

(1) O my dove *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the ſecret *places* of the ſtairs, let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voice.

SOLOMON's Song.

COMALA.

Take me to the cave of thy reſt, O lovely ſon of death!—

FINGAL.

Come to the cave of my reſt.—The ſtorm is over (1), and the ſun is on our fields. Come to the cave of my reſt, huntreſs of echoing Cona.

COMALA.

He is returned with his fame. I feel the right hand of his battles.—But I muſt reſt beſide the rock, till my ſoul ſettle from fear. —Let the harp be near; and raiſe the ſong, ye daughters of Morni.

DERSAGRENA.

Comala has ſlain three deer on Ardven; and the fire aſcends on the rock. Go to the feaſt of Comala, king of the woody Morven!

FINGAL.

Raiſe, ye ſons of ſong, the wars of the

(1) The winter is paſt, the rain is over, and gone.
SOLOMON's Song.

ſtreamy Carun; that my white-handed maid may rejoice, while I behold the feaſt of my love.

BARDS.

Roll, ſtreamy Carun, roll in joy, the ſons of battle fled. The ſteed is not ſeen on our fields; and the wings (1) of their pride ſpread in other lands. The ſun will now riſe in peace, and the ſhadows deſcend in joy. The voice of the chace will be heard; and the ſhields hang in the hall. Our delight will be in the war of the ocean, and our hands be red in the blood of Lochlin. Roll, ſtreamy Carun, roll in joy, the ſons of battle fled.

MELILCOMA.

Deſcend, ye light miſts, from high; ye moon-beams, lift her ſoul.—Pale lies the maid at the rock! Comala is no more!

FINGAL.

Is the daughter of Sarno dead, the white-boſomed maid of my love? Meet me, Comala, on my heaths, when I ſit alone at the ſtreams of my hills.

HIDALLAN.

Ceaſed the voice of the huntreſs of Galmal?

(1) Perhaps the poet alludes to the Roman eagle.

Why did I trouble the ſoul of the maid? When ſhall I ſee thee, with joy, in the chace of the dark-brown hinds?

FINGAL.

Youth of the gloomy brow! no more ſhalt thou feaſt in my halls. Thou ſhalt not purſue my chace, and my foes ſhall not fall by thy ſword (1).—Lead me to the place of her reſt that I may behold her beauty.—Pale ſhe lies at the rock, and the cold winds lift her hair. Her bow-ſtring ſounds in the blaſt, and her arrow was broken in her fall. Raiſe the praiſe of the daughter of Sarno, and give her name to the wind of the hills.

BARDS.

See! meteors roll around the maid; and moon-beams lift her ſoul! Around her, from their clouds, bend the awful faces of her fathers; Sarno (2) of the gloomy brow, and the red-rolling eyes of Fidallan. When ſhall thy white hand ariſe, and thy voice be

(1) The ſequel of the ſtory of Hidallan is introduced, as an epiſode, in the poem which immediately follows in this collection.

(1) Sarno the father of Comala died ſoon after the flight of his daughter.——Fidallan was the firſt king that reigned in Iniſtore.

heard on our rocks? The maids shall ſeek thee on the heath, but they will not find thee. Thou ſhalt come, at times, to their dreams, and ſettle peace in their ſoul. Thy voice ſhall remain in their ears (1), and they ſhall think with joy on the dreams of their reſt. Meteors roll around the maid, and moon-beams lift her ſoul.

(1) The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him ſtill ſpeaking, ſtill ſtood fix'd to hear.
MILTON.

THE
WAR of CAROS:
A POEM.

THE

WAR of CAROS:

A POEM.

THE

WAR of CAROS (1):

A POEM.

BRING, daughter of Toſcar, bring the harp; the light of the ſong riſes in Oſſian's ſoul. It is like the field, when darkneſs covers the hills around, and the ſhadow grows ſlowly on the plain of the ſun.

I behold my ſon, O Malvina, near the moſſy rock of Crona (2); but it is the miſt (3)

(1) Caros is probably the noted uſurper Carauſius, by birth a Menapian, who aſſumed the purple in the year 284; and, ſeizing on Britain, defeated the emperor Maximian Herculius in ſeveral naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in this poem *the king of ſhips.* —— He repaired Agricola's wall, in order to obſtruct the incurſions of the Caledonians; and when he was employed in that work, it appears he was attacked by a party under the command of Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian. This battle is the foundation of the preſent poem, which is addreſſed to Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar.

(2) Crona is the name of a ſmall ſtream, which runs into the Carron. On its banks is the ſcene of the preceding dramatic poem.

(3) Who is this that cometh out of the wilderneſs like pillars of ſmoke? SOLOMON's Song.

of the deſart tinged with the beam of the weſt. Lovely is the miſt that aſſumes the form of Oſcar! turn from it, ye winds, when ye roar on the ſide of Ardven.

Who comes towards my ſon, with the murmur of a ſong? His ſtaff is in his hand, his gray hair looſe on the wind. Surly joy lightens his face; and he often looks back to Caros. It is Ryno (1) of the ſong, he that went to view the foe.

What does Caros king of ſhips, ſaid the ſon of the now mournful Oſſian? ſpreads he the wings (2) of his pride, bard of the times of old?

He ſpreads them, Oſcar, replied the bard, but it is behind his gathered heap (3). He looks over his ſtones with fear, and beholds thee terrible, as the ghoſt of night that rolls the wave to his ſhips.

Go, thou firſt of my bards, ſays Oſcar, and take the ſpear of Fingal. Fix a flame on its point, and ſhake it to the winds of heaven. Bid him, in ſongs, to advance, and leave the rolling of his wave. Tell to Caros that

(1) Ryno is often mentioned in the ancient poetry.—— He ſeems to have been a bard of the firſt rank, in the days of Fingal.

(2) The Roman eagle.

(3) Agricola's wall, which Carauſius repaired.

I long for battle; and that my bow is weary of the chace of Cona. Tell him the mighty are not here; and that my arm is young.

He went with the ſound of his ſong. Oſcar reared his voice on high. It reached his heroes on Ardven, like the noiſe of a cave (1); when the ſea of Togorma rolls before it; and its trees meet the roaring winds.—They gather round my ſon, like the ſtreams of the hill; when, after rain, they roll in the pride of their courſe.

Ryno came to the mighty Caros, and ſtruck his flaming ſpear. Come to the battle of Oſcar, O thou that ſitteſt on the rolling of waters. Fingal is diſtant far; he hears the ſongs of his bards in Morven; and the wind of his hall is in his hair. His terrible ſpear is at his ſide; and his ſhield that is like that darkened moon. Come to the battle of Oſcar; the hero is alone.

He came not over the ſtreamy Carun (2); the bard returned with his ſong. Gray night grows dim on Crona. The feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. A hundred oaks burn to the wind, and faint light gleams over the heath. The ghoſts of Ardven paſs through the beam,

(1) —— As when the hollow rocks retain
The ſound of bluſtering winds.—— MILTON.

(2) The river Carron.

and ſhew their dim and diſtant forms. Comala (1) is half-unſeen on her meteor; and Hidallan is ſullen and dim, like the darkened moon behind the miſt of night.

Why art thou ſad? ſaid Ryno; for he alone beheld the chief. Why art thou ſad, Hidallan, haſt thou not received thy fame? The ſongs of Oſſian have been heard, and thy ghoſt has brightened in the wind, when thou didſt bend from thy cloud, to hear the ſong of Morven's bard.

And do thine eyes behold the hero, ſaid Oſcar, like the dim meteor of night? Say, Ryno, ſay, how fell the chief that was ſo renowned in the days of our fathers?—His name remains on the rocks of Cona; and I have often ſeen the ſtreams of his hills.

Fingal, replied the bard, had driven Hidallan from his wars. The king's ſoul was ſad for Comala, and his eyes could not behold Hidallan.

Lonely, ſad, along the heath, he ſlowly moved with ſilent ſteps. His arms hang diſordered on his ſide. His hair flies looſe from his

(1) This is the ſcene of Comala's death, which is the ſubject of the dramatic poem. The poet mentions her in this place, in order to introduce the ſequel of Hidallan's ſtory, who, on account of her death, had been expelled from the wars of Fingal.

helmet. The tear is in his down-caſt eyes; and the ſigh half-ſilent in his breaſt.

Three days he ſtrayed unſeen, alone, before he came to Lamor's halls: the moſſy halls of his fathers, at the ſtream of Balva (1). —There Lamor ſat alone beneath a tree; for he had ſent his people with Hidallan to war. The ſtream ran at his feet, and his gray head reſted on his ſtaff. Sightleſs are his aged eyes. He hums the ſong of other times.—The noiſe of Hidallan's feet came to his ear: he knew the tread of his ſon.

Is the ſon of Lamor returned; or is it the ſound of his ghoſt? Haſt thou fallen on the banks of Carun, ſon of the aged Lamor? Or, If I hear the ſound of Hidallan's feet, where are the mighty in war? where are my people, Hidallan, that were wont to return with their echoing ſhields?—Have they fallen on the banks of Carun?

No: replied the ſighing youth, the people of Lamor live. They are renowned in battle, my father; but Hidallan is renowned no more. I muſt ſit alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of the battle grows.

(1) This is perhaps that ſmall ſtream, ſtill retaining the name of Balva, which runs through the romantic valley of Glentivar in Stirlingshire. Balva ſignifies *a ſilent ſtream*; and Glentivar, *the ſequeſtered vale.*

But thy fathers never ſat alone, replied the riſing pride of Lamor; they never ſat alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of battle roſe.—Doſt thou not behold that tomb? Mine eyes diſcern it not. There reſts the noble Garmallon who never fled from war.—Come, thou renowned in battle, he ſays, come to thy father's tomb.—How am I renowned, Garmallon, for my ſon has fled from war?

King of the ſtreamy Balva! ſaid Hidallan with a ſigh, why doſt thou torment my ſoul? Lamor, I never feared.—Fingal was ſad for Comala, and denied his wars to Hidallan. Go to the gray ſtreams of thy land, he ſaid, and moulder like a leafleſs oak, which the winds have bent over Balva, never more to grow.

And muſt I hear, Lamor replied, the lonely tread of Hidallan's feet? When thouſands are renowned in battle, ſhall he bend over my gray ſtreams? Spirit of the noble Garmallon! carry Lamor to his place; his eyes are dark; his ſoul is ſad: and his ſon has loſt his fame.

Where, ſaid the youth, ſhall I ſearch for fame, to gladden the ſoul of Lamor? From whence ſhall I return with renown, that the ſound of my arms may be pleaſant in his ear?— If I go to the chace of hinds, my

name will not be heard.—Lamor will not feel my dogs, with his hands, glad at my arrival from the hill. He will not enquire of his mountains, or of the dark-brown deer of his deſarts.

I muſt fall, ſaid Lamor, like a leafleſs oak: it grew on a rock, but the winds have overturned it. — My ghoſt will be ſeen on my hills, mournful for my young Hidallan. Will not ye, ye miſts, as ye riſe, hide him from my ſight?—My ſon!— go to Lamor's hall: there the arms of our fathers hang. — Bring the ſword of Garmallon; he took it from a foe.

He went, and brought the ſword with all its ſtudded thongs.—He gave it to his father. The gray-haired hero felt the point with his hand.—

My ſon! — lead me to Garmallon's tomb: it riſes beſide that ruſtling tree. The long graſs is withered; I heard the breeze whiſtling there.—A little fountain murmurs near, and ſends its water to Balva. There let me reſt; it is noon: and the ſun is on our fields.

He led him to Garmallon's tomb. Lamor pierced the ſide of his ſon.—They ſleep together; and their ancient halls moulder on Balva's banks. — Ghoſts are ſeen there at noon:

the valley is ſilent, and the people ſhun the place of Lamor.

Mournful is thy tale, ſaid Oſcar, ſon of the times of old!—My ſoul ſighs for Hidallan, he fell in the days of his youth. He flies on the blaſt of the deſart, and his wandering is in a foreign land.—

Sons of the echoing Morven! draw near to the foes of Fingal. Send the night away in ſongs; and watch the ſtrength of Caros. Oſcar goes to the people of other times; to the ſhades of ſilent Ardven; where his fathers ſit dim in their clouds, and behold the future war.—And art thou there, Hidallan, like a half-extinguiſhed meteor? Come to my ſight, in thy ſorrow, chief of the roaring Balva!

The heroes move with their ſongs.—Oſcar ſlowly aſcends the hill.—The meteors of night are ſetting on the heath before him. A diſtant torrent faintly roars.—Unfrequent blaſts rush through aged oaks. The half-enlightened moon ſinks dim and red behind her hill.—Feeble voices are heard on the heath.—Oſcar drew his ſword.

Come, ſaid the hero, O ye ghoſts of my fathers! ye that fought againſt the kings of the world!—Tell me the deeds of future

times, and your diſcourſe in your caves; when you talk together, and behold your ſons in the fields of the valiant.

Trenmor came, from his hill, at the voice of his mighty ſon.—A cloud, like the ſteed of the ſtranger, ſupported his airy limbs. His robe is of the miſt of Lano, that brings death to the people. His ſword is a meteor half-extinguiſhed. His face is without form, and dark. He ſighed thrice over the hero: and thrice the winds of the night roared around. Many were his words to Oſcar: but they only came by halves to our ears: they were dark as the tales of other times, before the light of the ſong aroſe. He ſlowly vaniſhed, like a miſt that melts on the ſunny hill.

It was then, O daughter of Toſcar, my ſon begun firſt to be ſad. He foreſaw the fall of his race; and, at times, he was thoughtful and dark; like the ſun (1) when he carries a cloud on his face; but he looks afterwards on the hills of Cona.

Oſcar paſſed the night among his fathers; gray morning met him on the banks of Carun.

(1) —— *caput obſcura nitidum ferrugine texit.*

VIRG.

A green vale ſurrounded a tomb which aroſe in the times of old. Little hills lift their head at a diſtance; and ſtretch their old trees to the wind. The warriors of Caros ſet there, for they had paſſed the ſtream by night. They appeared, like the trunks of aged pines, to the pale light of the morning.

Oſcar ſtood at the tomb, and raiſed thrice his terrible voice. The rocking hills echoed around: the ſtarting roes bounded away; and the trembling ghoſts of the dead fled, ſhrieking on their clouds. So terrible was the voice of my ſon, when he called his friends.

A thousand ſpears roſe around; the people of Caros roſe.—Why, daughter of Toſcar, why that tear? My ſon, though alone, is brave. Oſcar is like a beam of the sky; he turns around, and the people fall. His hand is like the arm of a ghoſt, when he ſtretches it from a cloud: the reſt of his thin form is unſeen: but the people die in the vale.

My ſon beheld the approach of the foe; and he ſtood in the ſilent darkneſs of his ſtrength. — Am I alone, ſaid Oſcar, in the midſt of a thouſand foes?—Many a ſpear is there!—many a darkly-rolling eye!—Shall I fly to Ardven?—But did my fathers ever

fly!—The mark of their arm is in a thouſand battles.—Oſcar too will be renowned.—Come, ye dim ghoſts of my fathers, and behold my deeds in war!—I may fall; but I will be renowned like the race of the echoing Morven (1).

He ſtood dilated in his place, like a flood ſwelling in a narrow vale. The battle came, but they fell: bloody was the ſword of Oſcar.—The noiſe reached his people at Crona; they came like a hundred ſtreams. The warriors of Caros fled, and Oſcar remained like a rock left by the ebbing ſea.

(1) This paſſage is very like the ſoliloquy of Ulyſſes upon a ſimilar occaſion.

Ὤμοι ἐγὼ, τί πάθω; μέγα μὲν κακὸν, αἶκε φέβωμαι,
Πληθὺν ταρβήσας· τὸ δὲ ῥίγιον αἶκεν ἁλόω
Μᾶνος· &c. HOM. Il. 11.

What farther ſubterfuge, what hopes remain?
What ſhame, inglorious if I quit the plain?
What danger, ſingly if I ſtand the ground,
My friends all ſcatter'd, all the foes around?
Yet wherefore doubtful? let this truth ſuffice;
The brave meets danger, and the coward flies:
To die or conquer proves a hero's heart,
And knowing this, I know a ſoldier's part.
POPE.

Now dark and deep, with all his ſteeds, Caros rolled his might along: the little ſtreams are loſt in his courſe; and the earth is rocking round. —Battle ſpreads from wing to wing: ten thouſand ſwords gleam at once in the ſky.—But why ſhould Oſſian ſing of battles?—For never more ſhall my ſteel ſhine in war. I remember the days of my youth with ſorrow; when I feel the weakneſs of my arm. Happy are they who fell in their youth, in the midſt of their renown!—They have not beheld the tombs of their friends; or failed to bend the bow of their ſtrength.—Happy art thou, O Oſcar, in the midſt of thy rushing blaſt. Thou often goeſt to the fields of thy fame, where Caros fled from thy lifted ſword.

Darkneſs comes on my ſoul, O fair daughter of Toſcar; I behold not the form of my ſon at Carun; nor the figure of Oſcar on Crona. The ruſtling winds have carried him far away; and the heart of his father is ſad.

But lead me, O Malvina, to the ſound of my woods, and the roar of my mountain-ſtreams. Let the chace be heard on Cona; that I may think on the days of other years.—And bring me the harp, O maid, that I may touch it, when the light of my ſoul ſhall ariſe.—Be thou near, to learn the ſong; and future times ſhall hear of Oſſian.

The ſons of the feeble hereafter will lift the voice on Cona; and, looking up to the rocks, ſay, «Here Oſſian dwelt.» They ſhall admire the chiefs of old, and the race that are no more: while we ride on our clouds, Malvina, on the wings of the roaring winds. Our voices ſhall be heard, at times, in the deſart; and we ſhall ſing on the winds of the rock.

THE

WAR of INIS-THONA:

A POEM.

THE

WAR of INIS-THONA *;

A POEM.

OUR youth is like the dream of the hunter on the hill of heath. He ſleeps in the mild beams of the ſun; but he awakes amidſt a ſtorm: the red lightning flies around; and the trees ſhake their heads to the wind. He looks back with joy on the day of the ſun, and the pleaſant dreams of his reſt!

When ſhall Oſſian's youth return, or his ear delight in the ſound of arms? When ſhall I, like Oſcar, travel (1) in the light of my ſteel?—Come, with your ſtreams,

(1) Inis-thona, *i. e. the iſland of waves*, was a country of Scandinavia ſubject to its own king, but depending upon the kingdom of Lochlin.—— This poem is an epiſod introduced in a great work compoſed by Oſſian, in which the actions of his friends, and his beloved ſon Oſcar, were interwoven.—— The work itſelf is loſt, but ſome epiſodes, and the ſtory of the poem, are handed down by tradition. There are ſome now living, who, in their youth, have heard the whole repeated.

(2) Travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength. ISAIAH, lxiii. 1.

ye hills of Cona, and liſten to the voice of Oſſian! The ſong riſes, like the ſun, in my ſoul; and my heart feels the joys of other times.

I behold my towers, O Selma! and the oaks of thy ſhaded wall:—thy ſtreams ſound in my ear; thy heroes gather round. Fingal ſits in the midſt; and leans on the ſhield of Trenmor:—his ſpear ſtands againſt the wall; he liſtens to the ſong of his bards.—The deeds of his arm are heard; and the actions of the king in his youth.

Oſcar had returned from the chace, and heard the hero's praiſe.—He took the ſhield of Branno (1) from the wall; his eyes were filled with tears. Red was the cheek of youth. His voice was trembling, low. My ſpear ſhook its bright head in his hand: he ſpoke to Morven's king.

Fingal! thou king of heroes! Oſſian, next to him in war! ye have fought the battle in your youth; your names are renowned in ſong.—Oſcar is like the miſt of Cona: I

(1) This is Branno, the father of Evirallin, and grandfather to Oſcar. He was of Iriſh extraction, and lord of the country round the lake of Lego.——His great actions are handed down by tradition, and his hoſpitality has paſſed into a proverb.

appear and vaniſh.—The bard will not know my name.—The hunter will not ſearch in the heath for my tomb. Let me fight, O heroes, in the battles of Inis-thona. Diſtant is the land of my war!—ye ſhall not hear of Oſcar's fall.—Some bard may find me there, and give my name to the ſong.—The daughter of the ſtranger ſhall ſee my tomb, and weep over the youth that came from afar. The bard ſhall ſay, at the feaſt, hear the ſong of Oſcar from the diſtant land.

Oſcar, replied the king of Morven, thou ſhalt fight, ſon of my fame!—Prepare my dark-boſomed ſhip to carry my hero to Inis-thona. Son of my ſon, regard our fame;—for thou art of the race of renown. Let not the children of ſtrangers ſay, feeble are the ſons of Morven!—Be thou, in battle, like the roaring ſtorm: mild as the evening ſun, in peace.—Tell, Oſcar, to Inis-thona's king, that Fingal remembers his youth; when we ſtrove in the combat together, in the days of Agandecca.

They lifted up the ſounding ſail; the wind whiſtled through the thongs (1) of their maſts. Waves laſhed the oozy rocks: the

(1) Leather thongs were uſed in Oſſian's time, inſtead of ropes.

ſtrength of ocean roared.—My ſon beheld, from the wave, the land of groves. He rushed into the echoing bay of Runa; and ſent his ſword to Annir king of ſpears.

The gray-haired hero roſe, when he ſaw the ſword of Fingal. His eyes were full of tears, and he remembered the battles of their youth. Twice they lifted the ſpear before the lovely Agandecca: heroes ſtood far diſtant, as if two ghoſts contended.

But now, begun the king, I am old; the ſword lies uſeleſs in my hall. Thou who art of Morven's race! Annir has been in the ſtrife of ſpears; but he is pale, and withered now, like the oak of Lano. I have no ſon to meet thee with joy, or to carry thee to the halls of his fathers. Argon is pale in the tomb, and Ruro is no more.—My daughter is in the hall of ſtrangers, and longs to behold my tomb.—Her ſpouſe ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears; and comes (1) like a cloud of death

(1) Cormalo had reſolved on a war againſt his father-in-law, Annir, king of Inis-thona, in order to deprive him of his kingdom. The injuſtice of his deſigns was ſo much reſented by Fingal, that he ſent his grandſon, Oſcar, to the aſſiſtance of Annir. Both armies came ſoon to a battle, in which the conduct and valour of Oſcar obtained a complete victory. An end was put to the war by the death of Cormalo, who fell in a ſingle combat,

from Lano—Come thou, to share the feaſt of Annir, ſon of echoing Morven.

Three days they feaſted together; on the fourth, Annir heard the name of Oſcar (1). —They rejoiced in the ſhell (2); and purſued the boars of Runa.

Beſide the fount of moſſy ſtones, the weary heroes reſt. The tear ſteals in ſecret from Annir: and he broke the riſing ſigh.—Here darkly reſt, the hero ſaid, the children of my youth.—This ſtone is the tomb of Ruro: that tree ſounds over the grave of Argon. Do ye hear my voice, O my ſons, within your narrow houſe? Or do ye ſpeak in

by Oſcar's hand.—— This is the ſtory delivered down by tradition; though the poet, to raiſe the character of his ſon, makes Oſcar himſelf propoſe the expedition.

(1) It was thought, in thoſe days of heroiſm, an infringement upon the laws of hoſpitality, to ask the name of a ſtranger, before he had feaſted three days in the great hall of the family. *He that asks the name of the ſtranger*, is, to this day, an opprobrious term applied, in the north, to the inhoſpitable.

(2) *To rejoice in the ſhell* is a phraſe for feaſting ſumptuouſly, and drinking freely. I have obſerved in a preceding note, that the ancient Scots drunk in ſhells.

theſe ruſtling leaves, when the winds of the deſart riſe?

King of Inis-thona, ſaid Oſcar, how fell the children of youth? The wild boar often rushes over their tombs, but he does not diſturb the hunters. They purſue deer (1)

(3) The notion of Oſſian concerning the ſtate of the deceaſed, was the ſame with that of the ancient Greeks and Romans. They imagined that the ſouls purſued, in their ſeparate ſtate, the employments and pleaſures of their former life.

Arma procul, currusque virûm miratur inanes.
Stant terra defixæ haſtæ, paſſimque ſoluti
Per campum paſcuntur equi: quæ gratia currûm
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos.

VIRG.

The chief beheld their charriots from afar;
Their ſhining arms and courſers train'd to war:
Their lances fix'd in earth, their ſteeds around,
Free from the harneſs, graze the flow'ry ground.
The love of horſes which they had, alive,
And care of charriots, after death ſurvive.

DRYDEN.

Τὸν δὲ μετ' εἰσενόησα βίην Ἡρακληείην,
Εἴδωλον.——
——ὁ δ', ἐρεμνῇ νυκτὶ ἐοικὼς
Τυτθὸν τόξον ἔχων, καὶ ἐπὶ νευρῇφιν ὀϊστὸν,
Δεινὸν σαπλαίων, αἰεὶ βαλέοντι ἐοικὼς, &c.

formed

formed of clouds, and bend their airy bow. They ſtill love the ſport of their youth; and mount the wind with joy.

Cormalo, replied the king, is chief of ten thouſand ſpears; he dwells at the dark-rolling waters of Lano (1) which ſend forth the cloud of death. He came to Runa's echoing halls, and ſought the honour of the ſpear (2). The youth

Now I the ſtrength of Hercules behold,
A tow'ring ſpectre of gigantic mold;
Gloomy as night he ſtands in act to throw
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.
Around his breaſt a wond'rous zone is roll'd
Where woodland monſters grin in fretted gold;
There ſullen lions ſternly ſeem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tuſky boar,
There war and havock and deſtruction ſtood,
And vengeful murder red with human blood.

POPE.

(1) Lano was a lake of Scandinavia, remarkable, in the days of Oſſian, for emitting a peſtilential vapour in autumn. *And thou, O valiant Duchomar, like the miſt of marſhy Lano; when it ſails over the plains of autumn, and brings death to the people.* FINGAL, B. I.

(2) By *the honour of the ſpear* is meant a kind of tournament practiſed among the ancient northern nations.

was lovely as the firſt beam of the ſun; and few were they who could meet him in fight. —My heroes yielded to Cormalo: and my daughter loved the ſon of Lano.

Argon and Ruro returned from the chace; the tears of their pride deſcended: — They rolled their ſilent eyes on Runa's heroes, becauſe they yielded to a ſtranger: three days they feaſted with Cormalo: on the fourth my Argon fought. — But who could fight with Argon! — Lano's chief was overcome. His heart ſwelled with the grief of pride, and he reſolved, in ſecret, to behold the death of my ſons.

They went to the hills of Runa, and purſued the dark-brown hinds. The arrow of Cormalo flew in ſecret; and my children fell. He came to the maid of his love; to Inis-thona's dark-haired maid.—They fled over the deſart —and Annir remained alone.

Night came on, and day appeared; nor Argon's voice, nor Ruro's came. At length their much-loved dog is ſeen; the fleet and bounding Runar. He came into the hall and howled; and ſeemed to look towards the place of their fall.—We followed him: we found them here: and laid them by this moſſy ſtream. This is the haunt of Annir, when the chace of the hinds is over. I bend like the trunk of an aged oak above them: and my tears for ever flow.

O Ronnan! ſaid the riſing Oſcar, Ogar king of ſpears! call my heroes to my ſide, the ſons of ſtreamy Morven. To-day we go to Lano's water, that ſends forth the cloud of death. Cormalo will not long rejoice: death is often at the point of our ſwords.

They came over the deſart like ſtormy clouds, when the winds roll them over the heath: their edges are tinged with lightning: and the echoing groves foreſee the ſtorm. The horn of Oſcar's battle was heard; and Lano ſhook in all its waves. The children of the lake convened around the ſounding ſhield of Cormalo.

Oſcar fought, as he was wont in battle. Cormalo fell beneath his ſword: and the ſons of the diſmal Lano fled to their ſecret vales.—Oſcar brought the daughter of Iniſthona to Annir's echoing halls. The face of age was bright with joy; he bleſt the king of ſwords.

How great was the joy of Oſſian, when he beheld the diſtant ſail of his ſon! It was like a cloud of light that riſes in the eaſt, when the traveller is ſad in a land unknown; and diſmal night, with her ghoſts, is ſitting around him.

We brought him, with ſong, to Selma's halls. Fingal ordered the feaſt of ſhells to be

ſpread. A thouſand bards raiſed the name of Oſcar: and Morven anſwered to the noiſe. The daughter of Toſcar was there, and her voice was like the harp; when the diſtant ſound comes, in the evening, on the ſoft-ruſtling breeze of the vale.

O lay me, ye that ſee the light, near ſome rock of my hills: let the thick hazels be around, let the ruſtling oak be near. Green be the place of my reſt; and let the ſound of the diſtant torrent be heard. Daughter of Toſcar, take the harp, and raiſe the lovely ſong of Selma; that ſleep may overtake my ſoul in the midſt of joy; that the dreams of my youth may return, and the days of the mighty Fingal.

Selma! I behold thy towers, thy trees, and shaded wall. I ſee the heroes of Morven; and hear the ſong of bards. Oſcar lifts the ſword of Cormalo; and a thouſand youths admire its ſtudded thongs. They look with wonder on my ſon; and admire the ſtrength of his arm. They mark the joy of his father's eyes; they long for an equal fame.

And ye ſhall have your fame, O ſons of ſtreamy Morven.—My ſoul is often brightened with the ſong; and I remember the companions of my youth.—But ſleep deſcends

with the ſound of the harp; and pleaſant dreams begin to riſe. Ye ſons of the chace, ſtand far diſtant, nor diſturb my reſt. The bard of other times converſes now with his fathers, the chiefs of the days of old.—Sons of the chace, ſtand far diſtant; diſturb not the dreams of Oſſian.

with the sound of the harp; and pleasant dreams begin to rise. Ye sons of the chace, stand far distant, nor disturb my rest. The hard of other times converses now with his fathers, the chiefs of the days of old.— Sons of the chace, stand far distant; quiero not the dreams of Ossian.

THE
BATTLE of LORA:
A POEM.

THE

BATTLE of LORA:

A POEM.

THE BATTLE of LORA: A POEM. (1)

SON of the distant land, who dwellest in the secret cell! do I hear the sounds of

(1) This poem is compleat; nor does it appear from tradition, that it was introduced, as an episode, into any of Ossian's great works. —— It is called, in the original, *Duan a Chuldich*, or the *Culdee's poem*, because it was addressed to one of the first Christian missionaries, who were called, from their retired life, Culdees, or *sequestered persons*. ——The story bears a near resemblance to that which was the foundation of the Iliad. Fingal, on is return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feast to all his heroes: he forgot to invite Ma-ronnan and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him on his expedition. They resented his neglect; and went over to Erragon king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo soon gained him a great reputation in Sora: and Lorma the beautiful wife of Erragon fell in love with him. ——He found means to escape with her, and to come to Fingal, who resided then in Selma on the western coast. —— Erragon invaded Scotland, and was slain in battle by Gaul the son of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal. —— In this war

thy grove? or is it the voice of thy ſongs? The torrent was loud in my ear, but I heard a tuneful voice; doſt thou praiſe the chiefs of thy land; or the ſpirits (1) of the wind? —But, lonely dweller of the rock! look over that heathy plain: thou ſeeſt green tombs, with their rank, whiſtling graſs; with their ſtones of moſſy heads: thou ſeeſt them, ſon of the rock, but Oſſian's eyes have failed.

A mountain-ſtream comes roaring down, and ſends its waters round a green hill: four moſſy ſtones, in the midſt of withered graſs, rear their heads on the top: two trees, which the ſtorms have bent, ſpread their whiſtling branches around.—This is thy dwelling, Erragon (2); this thy narrow houſe: the ſound of thy ſhells has been long forgot in Sora: and thy ſhield is become dark in thy hall.—Erragon, king of ſhips! chief of diſtant Sora! how haſt thou fallen on our mountains (3)! How is the mighty low!

Aldo fell, in a ſingle combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon; and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief.

(1) The poet alludes to the religious hymns of the Culdees.

(2) Erragon, or Ferg-thonn, ſignifies *the rage of the waves*; probably a poetical name given him by Oſſian himſelf; for he goes by the name of Annir in tradition.

(3) The beauty of Iſrael is ſlain on thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! 2 Sam. ii. 19.

Son of the ſecret cell! doſt thou delight in ſongs? Hear the battle of Lora; the ſound of its ſteel is long ſince paſt. So thunder on the darkened hill roars, and is no more. The ſun returns with his ſilent beams: the glittering rocks, and green heads of the mountains ſmile.

The bay of Cona received our ships (1); from Ullin's rolling waves: our white ſheets hung looſe to the maſts: and the boiſterous winds roared behind the groves of Morven. —The horn of the king is ſounded, and the deer ſtart from their rocks. Our arrows flew in the woods; the feaſt of the hill was ſpread. Our joy was great on our rocks, for the fall of the terrible Swaran.

Two heroes were forgot at our feaſt; and the rage of their boſoms burned. They rolled their red eyes in ſecret: the ſigh burſt from their breaſts. They were ſeen to talk together, and to throw their ſpears on earth. They were two dark clouds, in the midſt of our joy; like pillars of miſt on the ſettled ſea: it glitters to the ſun, but the mariners fear a ſtorm.

How are the mighty fallen in the midſt of the battle! O Jonathan, thou waſt ſlain in thine high places. 2 SAM. ii. 25.

(1) This was at Fingal's return from his war againſt Swaran.

Raiſe my white ſails, ſaid Ma-ronnan, raiſe them to the winds of the weſt; let us rush, O Aldo, through the foam of the northern wave. We are forgot at the feaſt: but our arms have been red in blood. Let us leave the hills of Fingal, and ſerve the king of Sora.—His countenance is fierce, and the war darkens round his ſpear. Let us be renowned, O Aldo, in the battles of echoing Sora.

They took their ſwords and shields of thongs; and rushed to Lumar's ſounding bay. They came to Sora's haughty king, the chief of bounding ſteeds.—Erragon had returned from the chace: his ſpear was red in blood. He bent his dark face to the ground: and whiſtled as he went.—He took the ſtrangers to his feaſts: they fought and conquered in his wars.

Aldo returned with his fame towards Sora's lofty walls.—From her tower looked the ſpouſe of Erragon, the humid, rolling eyes of Lorma.—Her dark-brown hair flies on the wind of ocean: her white breaſt heaves, like ſnow on the heath; when the gentle winds ariſe, and ſlowly move it in the light. She ſaw young Aldo, like the beam of Sora's ſetting ſun. Her ſoft heart ſighed: tears filled her eyes; and her white arm ſupported her head.

Three days she ſat within the hall, and

covered grief with joy.—On the fourth she fled with the hero, along the rolling sea.—They came to Cona's mossy towers, to Fingal king of spears.

Aldo of the heart of pride! said the rising king of Morven, shall I defend thee from the wrath of Sora's injured king? who will now receive my people into their halls, or give the feast of strangers, since Aldo, of the little soul, has carried away the fair of Sora? Go to thy hills, thou feeble hand, and hide thee in thy caves; mournful is the battle we must fight, with Sora's gloomy king.—Spirit of the noble Trenmor! when will Fingal cease to fight? I was born in the midst of battles (1), and my steps must move in blood to my tomb. But my hand did not injure the weak, my steel did not touch the feeble in arms.—I behold thy tempests, O Morven, which will overturn my halls; when my children are dead in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then will the feeble come, but they will not know my tomb: my renown is in the song: and my actions shall be as a dream to future times.

His people gathered around Erragon, as

(1) Comhal the Father of Fingal was slain in battle against the tribe of Morni, the very day that Fingal was born; so that he may, with propriety, be said to have been *born in the midst of battles*.

the ſtorms round the ghoſt of night; when he calls them from the top of Morven, and prepares to pour them on the land of the ſtranger.—He came to the ſhore of Cona, and ſent his bard to the king, to demand the combat of thouſands; or the land of many hills.

Fingal ſat in his hall with the companions of his youth around him. The young heroes were at the chace, and far diſtant in the deſart. The gray-haired chiefs talked of other times, and of the actions of their youth; when the aged Narthmor (1) came, the king of ſtreamy Lora.

This is no time, begun the chief, to hear the ſongs of other years: Erragon frowns on the coaſt, and lifts ten thouſand ſwords. Gloomy is the king among his chiefs; he is like the darkened moon, amidſt the meteors of night.

Come, ſaid Fingal, from thy hall, thou daughter of my love; come from thy hall, Boſmina (2), maid of ſtreamy Morven! Narthmor, take the ſteeds (3) of the ſtrangers,

(1) Neart-mór, *great ſtrength.* Lora, *noiſy.*

(2) Boſ-mhina, *ſoft and tender hand.* She was the youngeſt of Fingal's children.

(3) Theſe were probably horſes taken in the incurſions of the Caledonians into the Roman province, which ſeems to be intimated in the phraſe of the *ſteeds of ſtrangers.*

and attend the daughter of Fingal: let her bid the king of Sora to our feaſt, to Selma's shaded wall.—Offer him, O Boſmina, the peace of heroes, and the wealth of generous Aldo: our youths are far diſtant, and age is on our trembling hands.

She came to the hoſt of Erragon, like a beam of light to a cloud.—In her right hand shone an arrow of gold; and in her left a ſparkling shell, the ſign of Morven's peace. —Erragon brightened in her preſence, as a rock before the ſudden beams of the ſun; when they iſſue from a broken cloud, divided by the roaring wind.

Son of the diſtant Sora, begun the mildly blushing maid, come to the feaſt of Morven's king, to Selma's shaded walls. Take the peace of heroes, O warrior, and let the dark ſword reſt by thy ſide.—And if thou chuſeſt the wealth of kings, hear the words of the generous Aldo.—He gives to Erragon an hundred ſteeds, the children of the rein; an hundred maids from diſtant lands; an hundred hawks with fluttering wing, that fly acroſs the sky. An hundred girdles (1) shall alſo be thine,

(1) Sanctified girdles, till very lately, were kept in many families in the north of Scotland; they were bound about women in labour, and were ſuppoſed to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth. They were impreſſed with ſeveral myſtical figures, and the ceremony of binding them

to bind high-boſomed women; the friends of the births of heroes, and the cure of the ſons of toil.—Ten ſhells ſtudded with gems ſhall ſhine in Sora's towers: the blue water trembles on their ſtars, and ſeems to be ſparking wine.—They gladdened once the kings of the world (3), in the midſt of their echoing halls. Theſe, O hero, ſhall be thine; or thy white-boſomed ſpouſe.—Lorma ſhall roll her bright eyes in thy halls; though Fingal loves the generous Aldo:—Fingal!—who never injured a hero, though his arm is ſtrong.

Soft voice of Cona! replied the king, tell him, that he ſpreads his feaſt in vain.—Let Fingal pour his ſpoils around me; and bend beneath my power. Let him give me the ſwords of his fathers, and the ſhields of other times; that my children may behold them in my halls, and ſay, « Theſe are the « arms of Fingal. »

Never ſhall they behold them in thy halls; ſaid the riſing pride of the maid; they are in the mighty hands of heroes who never yielded in war.—King of the echoing Sora! the ſtorm is gathering on our hills. Doſt thou not foreſee

about the woman's waiſt, was accompanied with words and geſtures which ſhewed the cuſtom to have come originally from the druids.

(1) The Roman emperors. Theſe ſhells were ſome of the ſpoils of the province.

the fall of thy people, ſon of the diſtant land?

She came to Selma's ſilent halls; the king beheld her down-caſt eyes. He roſe from his place, in his ſtrength, and ſhook his aged locks.—He took the ſounding mail of Trenmor; and the dark-brown ſhield of his fathers. Darkneſs filled Selma's hall, when he ſtretched his hand to his ſpear:—the ghoſts of thouſands were near, and foreſaw the death of the people. Terrible joy roſe in the face of the aged heroes: they rushed to meet the foe; their thoughts are on the actions of other years: and on the fame of the tomb.

Now the dogs of the chace appeared at Trathal's tomb: Fingal knew that his young heroes followed them, and he ſtopt in the midſt of his courſe.—Oſcar appeared the firſt;—then Morni's ſon, and Nemi's race:—Fercuth [1] ſhewed his gloomy form: Dermid ſpread his dark hair on the wind. Oſſian came the laſt. O ſon of the rock [2], I hummed the ſong of other times: my ſpear ſupported my ſteps over the little ſtreams, and my thoughts were of mighty men. Fingal ſtruck his boſſy ſhield; and gave the diſmal ſign of war; a thouſand ſwords, at once

(1) Fear-cuth, the ſame with Fergus, *the man of the word*, or a commander of an army.

(2) The poet addreſſes himſelf to the Culdee.

unsheathed, (1) gleam on the waving heath. Three gray-haired ſons of ſong raiſe the tuneful, mournful voice.—Deep and dark with ſounding ſteps, we rush, a gloomy ridge, along: like the ſhower of a ſtorm when it pours on the narrow vale.

The king of Morven ſat on his hill: the ſun-beam (2) of battle flew on the wind: the companions of his youth are near, with all their waving locks of age.—Joy roſe in the hero's eyes when he beheld his ſons in war; when he ſaw them amidſt the lightning of ſwords, and mindful of the deeds of their fathers.—Erragon came on, in his ſtrength, like the roar of a winter ſtream: the battle falls in his courſe, and death is at his ſide.

Who comes, ſaid Fingal, like the bounding roe, like the hart of echoing Cona? His ſhield glitters on his ſide; and the clang of his armour is mournful.—He meets with Erragon in the ſtrife!—Behold the battle of the chiefs!—it is like the contending of ghoſts in a gloomy ſtorm.—But falleſt thou, ſon

(1) He ſpake; and to confirm his words out-flew
Millions of flaming ſwords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the ſudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell. MILTON.

(2) I have obſerved in a former note, that the ſtandard of Fingal was called the ſun-beam from its being ſtudded with ſtones and gold.

of the hill, and is thy white boſom ſtained with blood? Weep, unhappy Lorma, Aldo is no more.

The king took the ſpear of his ſtrength; for he was ſad for the fall of Aldo: he bent his deathful eyes on the foe; but Gaul met the king of Sora.—Who can relate the fight of the chiefs?—The mighty ſtranger fell.

Sons of Cona! Fingal cried aloud, ſtop the hand of death.—Mighty was he that is now ſo low! and much is he mourned in Sora! The ſtranger will come towards his hall, and wonder why it is ſilent. The king is fallen, O ſtranger, and the joy of his houſe is ceaſed.—Liſten to the ſound of his woods: perhaps his ghoſt is there; but he is far diſtant, on Morven, beneath the ſword of a foreign foe.

Such were the words of Fingal, when the bard raiſed the ſong of peace. We ſtopped our uplifted ſwords, and ſpared the feeble foe. We laid Erragon in that tomb; and I raiſed the voice of grief: the clouds of night came rolling down, and the ghoſt of Erragon appeared to ſome. — His face was cloudy and dark; and an half-formed ſigh is in his breaſt. Bleſt be thy ſoul, O king of Sora! thine arm was terrible in war!

Lorma ſat, in Aldo's hall, at the light of

a flaming oak: the night came, but he did not return; and the ſoul of Lorma is ſad.—What detains thee, hunter of Cona? for thou didſt promiſe to return.—Has the deer been diſtant far; and do the dark winds ſigh, round thee, on the heath? I am in the land of ſtrangers, where is my friend, but Aldo? Come from thy echoing hills, O my beſt beloved!

Her eyes are turned toward the gate, and ſhe liſtens to the ruſtling blaſt. She thinks it is Aldo's tread, and joy riſes in her face: —but ſorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon.—And thou wilt not return, my love? Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the eaſt. Calm and bright is the breaſt of the lake! When ſhall I behold his dogs returning from the chace? When ſhall I hear his voice, loud and diſtant on the wind? Come from thy echoing hills, hunter of woody Cona!

His thin ghoſt appeared, on a rock, like the watry beam of the moon, when it ruſhes from between two clouds, and the midnight ſhower is on the field. — She followed the empty form over the heath, for ſhe knew that her hero fell.—I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it ſighs on the graſs of the cave.

She came, ſhe found her hero: her voice

was heard no more : ſilent she rolled her ſad eyes ; she was pale as a watry cloud, that riſes from the lake, to the beam of the moon.

Few were her days on Cona : she ſunk into the tomb : Fingal commanded his bards; and they ſung over the death of Lorma. The daughters (1) of Morven mourned her for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned.

Son of the diſtant land (2), thou dwelleſt in the field of fame : O let thy ſong riſe, at times, in the praiſe of thoſe that fell : that their thin ghoſts may rejoice around thee; and the ſoul of Lorma come on a moon-beam (1), when thou lieſt down to reſt, and the moon looks into thy cave. Then ſhalt thou ſee her lovely ; but the tear is ſtill on her cheek.

(1) The daughters of Iſrael went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year. JUDGES xi. 40.

(1) The poet addreſſes himſelf to the Culdee.

(1) Be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my reſt ; when my thoughts are of peace ; and the din of arms is over.
FINGAL, B. I.

The end of the firſt Volume.

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MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM